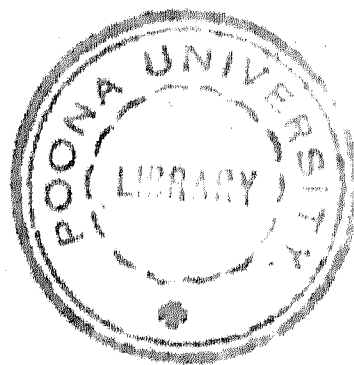
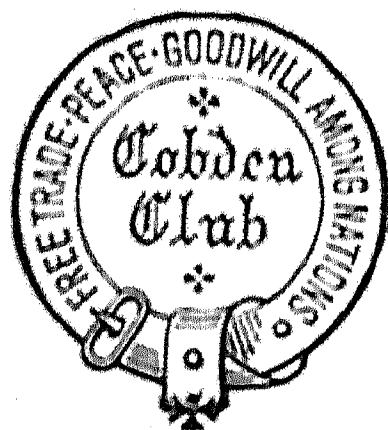


THE  
POLITICAL WRITINGS  
OF  
RICHARD COBDEN.



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1886.

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THE  
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PREFATORY NOTE.\*

IN October, 1835, Mr. Thomas Dick, a Scotch gentleman residing in London, wrote an article in the *Anthropological Magazine*, on the Corn Laws. In 1836, Mr. Dick was told who the "Manchester Manufacturer" was, and he then sent to Mr. Cobden his own article of the year before on the Corn Laws.

The following is the passage in that article to which Mr. Cobden's answer specially refers :—

"To alter these laws, however, so as to make them produce public revenue would not be any relief—almost the whole benefit would continue in favour of the landholder. By several writers on that subject this point has been altogether overlooked. We notice particularly a pamphlet lately published; entitled, 'England, Ireland, and America, by a Manchester Manufacturer.' The writer of this pamphlet, which in all other respects is well deserving the attention of every man who regards the interests of his country, says (we quote from memory), that 'we would not object to a tax on corn for the purpose of revenue, more than to a tax on sugar or any other article.' Now this is a statement which we hope the author will expunge in the next edition: for this reason, that a tax on any article *that can be raised at home* is very different from a tax levied on a *foreign* commodity, or rather on an article *that cannot be produced at home*. Every tax so levied

\* The notes prefixed to the several pamphlets published in this volume were written by Mr. F. W. CHESON.

is nothing else than a bonus to the producer of the article on which it is levied."

Of course by the word "tax" in this extract was meant a Customs duty.

(COPY.)

"Manchester, 7th Oct., 1836.

"Sir,

"I have received the letter with its enclosures which you did me the favour to send; and with reference to the principle of taxing a commodity like corn, which is the growth of our own soil, I acknowledge that I think your view is correct. It certainly did not occur to me at the time I included corn and sugar in one rule that there was the distinction which you have for the first time pointed out to me.

"I congratulate you on the direction you have given to your talents. Probably in the annals of corrupt legislation there is nothing so gross, so impolitic, so suicidally selfish, as our own corn laws. I confess to you that, after all, I do not look to reason or justice as a competent tribunal to settle this question upon a right basis in our day. It will only be done by a mighty effort of the irresistible masses. Probably a commercial crisis, or a famine harvest will after all decide the matter. I confess this is a very unphilosophical and unstatesmanlike solution of a difficulty in legislation; but it has long presented itself to me as the most probable one. The corn laws are a part only of a system in which Whig and Tory aristocracy have about an equal interest. The colonies, army, navy, and church are, with the corn laws, merely accessories to our aristocratic government. John Bull has his work cut out for the next fifty years to purge his house of those impurities!

"I send you a copy of a pamphlet which I lately published; and

"I am, Sir, yours very respectfully,

"RICHD. COBDEN.

"'England, Ireland, and America' is a stereotyped pamphlet, and consequently does not allow me to notice as I should otherwise have been glad to do your correction of my views.

"Thos. Dick, Esq.,

"9, Old Fish Street, London."

# ENGLAND, IRELAND, AND AMERICA.

1835.

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“The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little *political* connection as possible.”—*Washington's farewell address to the American people.*

## NOTE TO "ENGLAND, IRELAND, AND AMERICA."

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As the first of Mr. Cobden's literary productions—written and published in the spring of 1835, when he was unknown to fame, and a simple "Manchester Manufacturer"—the following pamphlet is invested with an interest peculiarly its own. Like the succeeding work on "Russia," it has for many years been out of print ; and although, during the intervening period, it has been constantly alluded to and frequently criticised, probably few of those who wrote and still fewer of those who read the strictures of the press upon it, had an opportunity of reading either of the editions which were published thirty years ago. It may be interesting to state that both pamphlets were in the first instance published by Mr. Ridgway, of Piccadilly, and subsequently reproduced in a cheap form by the late Mr. William Tait, of Edinburgh, in whose hands "England, Ireland, and America" passed through, at least, six editions. It will be seen that at that early period Mr. Cobden foresaw the importance to Ireland of Trans-Atlantic steam-packet stations at suitable points on her coast, as well as of the more general cultivation of flax, the great staple of Irish manufactures, on soil suitable for the purpose. He dealt with the questions of the national debt and of the military and naval establishments of the United States as he then found them. No one could at that time foresee that the institution of negro slavery would entail upon the American nation so terrible a retribution as that with which they have since been visited, although Mr. Cobden was careful to point out that the existence of this "indelible stain upon their religion and government" would "serve to teach mankind that no deed of guilt or oppression can be perpetrated with impunity, even by the most powerful." This pamphlet also contains Mr. Cobden's earliest published contribution to the literature of free trade. It may further be remarked that almost immediately after he had seen these pages through the press, he paid his first visit to the United States. He landed in New York on Sunday, June 7th, 1835, and—reckoning the sea voyages—was absent exactly three months. The impressions which he had previously formed of the illimitable resources of the great Republic, of the ingenious and industrious character of the people, of the wide diffusion among them of the blessings of education, and of the boundless spirit of enterprise by which they were animated, were fully confirmed by what he saw with his own eyes : and on his return to England he found nothing in his pamphlet that required to be omitted or modified in the subsequent editions. .



## ENGLAND.

To maintain what is denominated the true balance of European power has been the fruitful source of wars from the earliest time ; and it would be instructive, if the proposed limits of this work permitted it, to bring into review all the opposite struggles into which England has plunged for the purpose of adjusting, from time to time, according to the ever-varying theories of her rulers, this national equilibrium. Let it suffice to say, that history exhibits us, at different periods, in the act of casting our sword into the scale of every European State. In the meantime, events have proclaimed, but in vain, how futile must be our attempts to usurp the sceptre of the Fates. Empires have arisen unbidden by us ; others have departed, despite our utmost efforts to preserve them. All have undergone a change so complete that, were the writers who only a century ago lauded the then existing state of the balance of Europe to reappear, they would be startled to find, in the present relations of the Continent, no vestige of that perfect adjustment which had been purchased at the price of so much blood. And yet we have able writers and statesmen of the present day, who would advocate a war to prevent a derangement of what we now choose to pronounce the just equipoise of the power of Europe.

For a period of six hundred years, the French and English people had never ceased to regard each other as natural enemies. Scarcely a generation passed over its allotted section of this vast interval of time without sacrificing its victims to the spirit of national hate. It was reserved for our own day

to witness the close of a feud, the bloodiest, the longest, and yet, in its consequences, the most nugatory of any that is to be found in the annals of the world. Scarcely had we time to indulge the first emotions of pity and amazement at the folly of past ages, when, as if to justify to the letter the sarcasm of Hume, when alluding to another subject,\* we, the English people, are preparing, through the vehicles of opinion, the public press, to enter upon a hostile career with Russia.

Russia, and no longer France, is the chimera that now haunts us in our apprehension for the safety of Europe: whilst Turkey, for the first time, appears to claim our sympathy and protection against the encroachments of her neighbours; and, strange as it may appear to the politicians of a future age, such is the prevailing sentiment of hostility towards the Russian government at this time in the public mind, that, with but few additional provocatives administered to it by a judicious minister through the public prints, a conflict with that Christian power, in defence of a Mahomedan people, more than a thousand miles distant from our shores, might be made palatable, nay, popular, with the British nation. It would not be difficult to find a cause for this antipathy: the impulse, as usual with large masses of human beings, is a generous one, and arises, in great part, from emotions of pity for the gallant Polish people, and of indignation at the conduct of their oppressors—sentiments in which we cordially and zealously concur: and if it were the province of Great Britain to administer justice to all the people of the earth—in other words, if God had given us, as a nation, the authority and the power, together with the wisdom and the goodness, sufficient to qualify us to deal forth His vengeance—then should we be called upon in this case to rescue the weak from the hands of their spoilers. But do we possess these

\* "Though in a future age it will probably become difficult to persuade some nations that any human two-legged creature could ever embrace such principles. And it is a thousand to one but those nations themselves shall have something fully as absurd in their own creed, to which they will give a most implicit consent."

favoured endowments? Are we armed with the powers of Omnipotence: or, on the contrary, can we discover another people rising into strength with a rapidity that threatens inevitably to overshadow us? Again, do we find ourselves to possess the virtue and the wisdom essential to the possession of supreme power; or, on the other hand, have we not at our side, in the wrongs of a portion of our own people, a proof that we can justly lay claim to neither?

Ireland and the United States of America ought to be the subjects of our inquiry at this period, when we are, apparently, preparing ourselves to engage as parties to a question involving countries with which we are but remotely, and in comparison, very little interested. Before entering upon some reflections under each of these heads, we shall call the consideration of our readers to the affairs of Russia and Turkey; and we shall use as the text of our remarks a pamphlet that has recently made its appearance under the title of "England, France, Russia, and Turkey," to which our attention was first attracted by the favourable comments bestowed upon it by the influential portion of the daily press.

The writer \* appears to be versed in the diplomatic mysteries of the courts of St. Petersburg and Constantinople: indeed, he hints that he has been himself a party to the negotiations carried on with the Sublime Porte. He says, p. 77—"The details into which we have already entered may probably contain internal evidence of our opinion not having been formed in a closet, remote from the subject we are treating." And the concluding words of the pamphlet are calculated to lead to a similar inference; and they are, moreover, curious, as illustrating the tone of feeling with which the author regards the Russian government:—"Our words have been fewer than our thoughts; and, while we have to regret abler hands have not wielded our arms, we owe it to our subject to state, that

\* [Mr. Urquhart, formerly Secretary of the English Embassy at Constantinople.]

others, unproduced, prudence forbade to draw until the *hour of retribution arrives.*"

After a preliminary appeal to the sympathies of his readers in favour of Poland, he proceeds to ask, "Is the substance of Turkey to be added to the growth of Russia? Is the mammoth of the Sarmatian plains to become the leviathan of the Hesperian seas? Is another victim to be sacrificed within so short a time on the same altar, and because the same trifling succour is again withheld? Are the remains of Turkey to be laid upon the tomb of Poland, to exclude every ray of hope, and render its doom irrevocable?"

To what extent this trifling succour is meant to go will be explained in the writer's own words by-and-by. But we propose, in this place, to inquire what are the motives that England can have to desire to preserve the Ottoman Empire at the risk of a war, however trifling? In entering on this question we shall, of course, premise, that no government has the right to plunge its people into hostilities, except in defence of their own national honour or interests. Unless this principle be made the rule of all, there can be no guarantee for the peace of any one country, so long as there may be found a people, whose grievances may attract the sympathy or invite the interference of another State. How, then, do we find our honour or interests concerned in defending the Turkish territory against the encroachments of its Christian neighbour? It is not alleged that we have an alliance with the Ottoman Porte, which binds us to preserve its empire intact; nor does there exist, with regard to this country, a treaty between Russia and Great Britain (as was the case with respect to Poland) by which we became jointly guarantees for its separate national existence. The writer we are quoting puts the motive for our interference in a singular point of view; he says, "This obligation is imposed upon us as members of the European community by the approaching annihilation of another of our compeers. It is imposed upon us by the necessity of maintaining the consideration due to ourselves—the first

element of political power and influence." From this it would appear to be the opinion of our author, that our being one of the nations of Europe imposes on us, besides the defence of our own territory, the task of upholding the rights and perpetuating the existence of all the other powers of the Continent, a sentiment common, we fear, to a very large portion of the English public. In truth, Great Britain has, in contempt of the dictates of prudence and self-interest, an insatiable thirst to become the peace-maker abroad, or if that benevolent task fail her, to assume the office of gendarme, and keep in order, gratuitously, all the refractory nations of Europe. Hence does it arise, that, with an invulnerable island for our territory, more secure against foreign molestation than is any part of the coast of North America, we magnanimously disdain to avail ourselves of the privileges which nature offers to us, but cross the ocean, in quest of quadripartite treaties or quintuple alliances, and, probably, to leave our own good name in pledge for the debts of the poorer members of such confederacies. To the same spirit of overweening national importance may in great part be traced the ruinous wars, and yet more ruinous subsidies, of our past history. Who does not now see that, to have shut ourselves in our own ocean fastness, and to have guarded its shores and its commerce by our fleets, was the line of policy we ought never to have departed from—and who is there that is not now *feeling*, in the burthen of our taxation, the dismal errors of our departure from this rule during the last war? How little wisdom we have gathered along with these bitter fruits of experience, let the subject of our present inquiry determine !

Judging from another passage in this pamphlet, it would appear that England and France are now to be the sole dictators of the international relations of all Europe. The following passage is dictated by that pure spirit of English vanity which has already proved so expensive an appendage to our character ; and which, unless allayed by increased knowledge

among the people, or fairly crushed out of us by our financial burthens, will, we fear, carry us still deeper into the vortex of debt :—"The squadrons of England and France anchored in the Bosphorus, they dictate their own terms to Turkey ; to Russia they proclaim, that from that day they intend to arbitrate supremely between the nations of the earth."

We know of but one way in which the honour of this country may be involved in the defence and preservation of the Turkish empire ; and that is, through the indiscreet meddling in the intrigues of the seraglio, on the part of our diplomatists. After a few flourishes of the pen, in the style and spirit of the above quotations, shall have passed between the gentlemen of the rival embassies of St. James's and St. Petersburg, who knows but the English nation may, some day, be surprised by the discovery that it is compromised in a quarrel from which there is no honourable escape but by the disastrous course of a long and ruinous war.

If our honour be not committed in this case, still less shall we find, by examining a little more at length, that our *interests* are involved in the preservation of Turkey. To quote again from the pamphlet before us :—"Suffice it to say, that the countries consuming to the yearly value of thirty millions\* of our exports, would be placed under the immediate control of the coalition (Russia, Prussia, and Austria), and, of course, under the regulations of the Russian tariff ; not as it is to-day, but such as it would be when the mask is wholly dropped. What would be the effect on the internal state of England, if a considerable diminution of exportation occurred ? But it is not only the direct effects of the tariffs of the coalition that are to be apprehended : would it not command the tariffs of Northern and Southern America ?" Passing over, as too chimerical for comment, the allusion to the New World, we here have the argument which has, immediately or remotely, decided us to undertake almost every war in which Great Britain has been

\* Official value.

involved—viz., *the defence of our commerce*. And yet it has, over and over again, been proved to the world, that violence and force can never prevail against the natural wants and wishes of mankind: in other words, that despotic laws against freedom of trade never can be executed. “Trade cannot, will not, be forced; let other nations prohibit by what severity they please, interest will prevail: they may embarrass their own trade, but cannot hurt a nation whose trade is free, so much as themselves.” So said a writer\* a century ago, whilst experience down to our own day has done nothing but confirm the truth of his maxims; and yet people would frighten us into war, to prevent the forcible annihilation of our trade! Can any proofs be offered how visionary are such fears, more conclusive than are to be found in the history of Napoleon’s celebrated war against English commerce? Let us briefly state a few particulars of this famous struggle. The subject, though familiar to everybody, is one the moral of which cannot be too frequently enforced.

The British Islands were, in 1807, declared by Bonaparte in a state of blockade, by those decrees which aimed at the total destruction of the trade of Great Britain. The Berlin and Milan edicts declared—

1. The British Isles were in a state of blockade.
2. All commerce and correspondence were forbidden. All English letters were to be seized in the post-houses.
3. Every Englishman, of whatever rank or quality, found in France, or the countries allied with her, was declared a prisoner of war.
4. All merchandise or property, of whatever kind, belonging to English subjects, was declared lawful prize.
5. All articles of English manufacture, and articles produced in her colonies, were, in like manner, declared contraband, and lawful prize.

France, Russia, Austria, Prussia, Holland, Italy, and the States of Germany, joined in this conspiracy against the commerce of England. To enforce more effectually these prohibi-

\* Sir Matthew Decker.

tions, commissioners of rank were appointed to each of the principal seaports of the Continent. Now, let us mark well the result of this great confederation, which was formed for the avowed purpose of annihilating us as a trading people. The following is an account of the declared value of our exports of British products for each of the years mentioned, ending 5th of January :—

1804	.	.	.	.	.	£36,100,000
1805	.	.	.	.	.	37,100,000
1806	.	.	.	.	.	37,200,000
1807	.	.	.	.	.	39,700,000
1808	.	.	.	.	.	36,400,000
1809	.	.	.	.	.	36,300,000

It must be borne in mind that the proclamation of war against our trade, above-mentioned, was dated in 1807. It appears, then, by the preceding tabular view, that our commerce sustained a loss to the extent of about  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. in 1808 and 1809, as compared with 1806 and 1807; whilst the amount of exports in the year 1808, or 1809, if compared with the mean or average amount of the above six years, shows a diminution only of about two per cent. And all this took place, be it remembered, when two-thirds of our foreign trade was confined to Europe.\*

It is singular to observe that, by the following table, the declared value of our exports, during the last six years, has remained nearly stationary, at a point varying from the average of the former series of years only by a fraction.

\* It would be amusing, and full of romantic interest, to detail some of the ten thousand justifiable arts invented to thwart this unnatural coalition, which, of necessity, converted almost every citizen of Europe into a smuggler. Bourrienne, who was himself one of the commissioners at Hamburgh, gives some interesting anecdotes in his "Memoirs" under this head. The writer is acquainted with a merchant who was interested in a house that employed five hundred horses in transporting British goods, many of which were landed in Slavonia, and thence conveyed overland to France, at a charge of about £28 a cwt.—more than fifty times the present freight of merchandise from London to Calcutta!



Below is a table of the exports of the products of British industry for six years, ending 1833 :—

1828	.	.	.	.	.	£36,400,000
1829	.	.	.	.	.	36,200,000
1830	.	.	.	.	.	35,200,000
1831	.	.	.	.	.	37,700,000
1832	.	.	.	.	.	36,600,000
1833	.	.	.	.	.	36,000,000

But it must be borne in view, that, as the price of the raw materials of manufactures, such as wool, cotton, silk, iron, &c., together with the price of grain, has undergone a vast depreciation since the former periods, of course the actual exchangeable value of the money amounts in the second table is very much greater than in the first.

In fact, the official value of our exports appears to have doubled, whilst the real or declared value has remained stationary. Bearing all this in mind, still, if we take into consideration the great increase of our exports, since 1809, to the Americas, and to Asia—the quarters where our commerce has been principally increasing—and if we also recollect the higher rate of profits at the earlier periods, it becomes a question if our trade with Europe, notwithstanding its rapid increase in population and wealth, has been benefited by the peace. It is exceedingly doubtful whether, whilst we were engaged in a war for the avowed emancipation of our commerce, our merchants were not, all the while, carrying on a more gainful traffic with the Continent than they now do, when its people have become our bloodless rivals at the loom and the spinning frame.

Where, then, is the wisdom of our fighting European battles in defence of a commerce which knows so well of itself how to elude all its assailants? And what have we to show as a per-contra for the four hundred millions of debt incurred in our last continental wars?

We have dwelt at greater length upon this point, because

the advocates of an intermeddling policy always hold up the alluring prospect of benefiting commerce ; and we think we have said enough to prove that Russian violence cannot destroy, or even sensibly injure, our trade.

But it here becomes proper to ask, Are we warranted in the presumption that Russia is less inclined than other nations for trading with us ? Our author, indeed, says, p. 90, " Is it for England to allow an empire, a principle of whose existence is freedom of commerce, to be swallowed up by the most restrictive power on the face of the earth ? Is it for England to allow the first commercial position in the world to be occupied by such a power ? Is it for England to allow freedom of commerce to be extinguished in the only portion of Europe where it exists ? "

We are at a loss to account for the ignorance that exists with reference to the comparative importance of our trade with Russia and with Turkey. The following tables exhibit the amounts of our exports to each of the two countries, at the dates mentioned :—

EXPORTS TO RUSSIA.		EXPORTS TO TURKEY.	
A.D.	£	A.D.	£
1700 .	60,000	1700 .	220,000
1750 .	100,000	1750 .	135,000
1790 .	400,000	1790 .	120,000
1800 .	1,300,000	1800 .	165,000
1820 .	2,300,000	1820 .	800,000*

By which it will be seen that, whilst Turkey has, in more than a century, quadrupled the amount of her purchases, Russia has, in the same interval of time, increased her consumption of our goods nearly forty-fold. Our exports since the year 1700 have increased in a more rapid ratio to Russia than to any other country in Europe.

The rise of the commerce of St. Petersburg is unparalleled by anything we meet with in Europe, out of England.

\* M'Culloch's Dict., 2nd Edit., p. 671.

This city was founded in 1703; in 1714 only sixteen ships entered the port, whilst in 1833 twelve hundred and thirty-eight vessels arrived, and of which no less a proportion than six hundred and ninety-four were British.

Nor must it be forgotten, in drawing a comparison between the value of our trade with Russia and that with Turkey, that, whilst the former has, until very recently, possessed but little sea-coast, with but one good port, and that closed by ice one half of the year, the latter had, down to the date at which we have purposely brought the comparison (when the Greek Islands still formed a portion of the Turkish empire), more than double the extent of maritime territory of any power in Europe, situated in latitudes, too, the most favourable for commerce, including not only the best harbours in the world, but the largest river in Europe.

Neither must it be forgotten that the natural products of the Russian empire are restricted to corn, hemp, tallow, timber, and hides, with a few minor commodities; and that of these, the two important articles of corn and timber are subjected to restrictive, or we might almost say, prohibitive, duties at our hands; whilst Turkey contains the soil and climate adapted for producing almost every article of commerce, with the exception probably only of sugar and tea. We need only mention corn, timber, cotton-wool, sheep's-wool, wood and drugs for dyeing, wine and spirits, tobacco, silk, tallow, hides and skins, coffee, spices, and bullion—to exhibit the natural fertility of a country which is now rendered sterile by the brutalising rule of Mahomedanism. Nor can it be said that commerce is wholly free in Turkey, since the exportation of silk is burthened with a duty, and it is prohibited to export grain,\* or any other article of necessity, including the product of the mines.

It is true that this otherwise barbarous government has set an example to more civilised countries, by its

\* [This prohibition does not now exist.]

moderate import duties on foreign productions ; and this, we suspect, is the secret of that surprising tenacity of life which exists in the Ottoman empire, notwithstanding the thousand organic diseases that are consuming its body politic. But what avails to throw open the ports of a country to our ships, if the population will not labour to obtain the produce wherewith to purchase our commodities ?

Plains, which Dr. Clarke compares to the fairest portions of Kent, capable of yielding the best silk and cotton, abound in Syria ; but despotic violence has triumphed even over nature ; and this province, which once boasted of Damascus and Antioch, of Tyre, Sidon, and Aleppo, has, by the oppressive exactions of successive pachas, become little better than a deserted waste.

“ Everywhere,” says Volney, speaking of Asiatic Turkey, “ everywhere I saw only tyranny and misery, robbery and devastation. I found daily on my route abandoned fields, deserted villages, cities in ruins. Frequently I discovered antique monuments, remains of temples, of palaces, and of fortresses ; pillars, aqueducts, and tombs. This spectacle led my mind to meditate on past times, and excited in my heart profound and serious thought. I recalled those ancient ages when twenty famous nations existed in these countries ; I painted to myself the Assyrian on the banks of the Tigris, the Chaldean on those of the Euphrates, the Persian reigning from the Indus to the Mediterranean. I numbered the kingdoms of Damascus and Idumea, of Jerusalem and Samaria, the war-like States of the Philistines, and the commercial republics of Phoenicia. This Syria, said I, now almost unpeopled, could then count a hundred powerful cities ; its fields were covered with towns, villages, and hamlets. Everywhere appeared cultivated fields, frequented roads, crowded habitations. What, alas ! has become of those ages of abundance and of life ? What of so many brilliant creations of the hand of man ? Where are the ramparts of Nineveh, the walls of Babylon, the palaces

of Persepolis, the temples of Baalbec and Jerusalem? Where are the fleets of Tyre, the docks of Arad, the looms of Sidon, and that multitude of sailors, of pilots, of merchants, of soldiers? Where are those labourers, those harvests, those flocks, and that crowd of living beings that then covered the face of the earth? Alas! I have surveyed this ravaged land—I have visited the places which were the theatre of so much splendour—and have seen only solitude and desertion. The temples are crumbled down; the palaces are overthrown; the ports are filled up; the cities are destroyed; the earth, stripped of its inhabitants, is only a desolate place of tombs.”

No less hideous is the picture given to us by another eloquent eye-witness of the desolation of this once flourishing region.

“A few paltry shops expose nothing but wretchedness to view, and even these are frequently shut, from apprehension of the passage of a Cadi.

“Not a creature is to be seen in the streets, not a creature at the gates, except now and then a peasant gliding through the gloom, concealing under his garments the fruits of his labour, lest he should be robbed of his hard earnings by the rapacious soldier. The only noise heard from time to time is the galloping of the steed of the desert; it is the janissary, who brings the head of the Bedouin, or returns from plundering the unhappy fellah.” \*

A still more recent traveller, and one of our own countrymen, has these emphatic words, when speaking of the Turkish territory: “Wherever the Osmanli has trod devastation and ruin mark his steps, civilisation and the arts have fled, and made room for barbarism and the silence of the desert and the tomb.” †

But why need we seek for foreign testimony of the withering and destroying influences of Mahomedanism? The Turks

\* Chateaubriand.

† Macfarlane's Turkey.

themselves have a proverb, which says, "Where the sultan's horse has trod, there no grass grows."

"And where the Spahi's hoof hath trod,  
The verdure flies the bloody sod."

BYRON.

Our limits do not allow us to dwell on this portion of our task; suffice it to say, that, beneath the sway of Ottoman violence, the pursuits of agriculture and commerce are equally neglected, in regions that once comprised the mart and granary of the world. *No ship was ever seen to leave a Turkish port, manned with Turkish sailors, upon the peaceful errand of foreign mercantile traffic.* On the ocean, as upon land, this fierce people have always been the scourge of humanity, and a barrier to the progress of commerce and civilisation. In their hands, Smyrna, which was termed by the ancients the ornament of Asia, and Constantinople, chosen for the unrivalled seat of empire by one who possessed the sovereignty of the world—these two cities, adapted by nature to become the centres of a vast trade, are now, through the barbarism and indolence of their rulers, little better than nurseries of the plague!

What shall we say more to prove that England can have no interest in perpetuating the commercial bondage of such a land as we have been describing?

Before quitting the consideration of this part of our subject, we will, for a moment, give way to our imagination, and picture the results that would follow, supposing that the population of the United States of America could be moved from their present position on the earth's surface, and in a moment be substituted in the place of the inhabitants of Turkey. Very little difference of latitude opposes itself to the further supposition that the several pachalics, being transformed into free states, should be populated by the natives of such districts of the New World as gave the fittest adaptation to their previous habits of labour. Now, let us picture this empire, after it had

been for fifty years only subject to the laws, the religion, and the industry of such a people.

Constantinople, outrivalling New York, may be painted, with a million of free citizens, as the focus of all the trade of eastern Europe. Let us conjure up the thousands of miles of railroads, carrying to the very extremities of this empire—not the sanguinary satrap, but—the merchandise and the busy traders of a free state; conveying—not the firman of a ferocious sultan, armed with death to the trembling slave, but—the millions of newspapers and letters, which stimulate the enterprise and excite the patriotism of an enlightened people. Let us imagine the Bosphorus and the Sea of Marmora swarming with steamboats, connecting the European and Asiatic continents by hourly departures and arrivals; or issuing from the Dardanelles, to reanimate once more with life and fertility the hundred islands of the Archipelago; or, conceive the rich shores of the Black Sea in the power of the New Englander, and the Danube pouring down its produce from the plains of Moldavia and Wallachia, now subject to the plough of the hardy Kentuckian. Let us picture the Carolinians, the Virginians, and the Georgians, transplanted to the coasts of Asia Minor, and behold its hundreds of cities again bursting from the tomb of ages, to recall religion and civilisation to the spot from whence they first issued forth upon the world. Alas! that this should be only an illusion of the fancy!

There remains another argument in favour of an interposition on our part in defence of Turkey for us to notice; and it points to the danger our colonies might be in, from any movements which Russia should make eastward. “Our Indian possessions,” says the pamphlet before quoted: “shall we fight for them on the Dnieper, as directing the whole Mussulman nation, or shall we fight for them on the Indus, at Bagdad, or in Persia, single-handed; close to the insurrection she will raise in her rear, and when she is in possession of Turkey?”

We might have passed over this point as too chimerical for

comment, were it not that it involves a question upon which, we believe, there is greater misapprehension than upon any other subject that engages the attention of our countrymen. Supposing Russia or Austria to be in possession of the Turkish dominions, would she not find her attention and resources far too abundantly occupied in *retaining* the sovereignty over fifteen millions of fierce and turbulent subjects, animated with warlike hatred to their conquerors, and goaded into rebellion by the all-powerful impulse of a haughty and intolerant religion, to contemplate adding still further to her embarrassments by declaring war with England, and giving the word of march to Hindostan? Who does not perceive that it could not, for ages at least, add to the *external power* of either of these states, if she were to get possession of Turkey by force of arms? Is Russia stronger abroad by her recent perfidious incorporation of Polish territory? Would Holland increase her power if she were to reconquer her Belgic provinces to-morrow? Or, to come to our own doors, for example, was Great Britain more powerful whilst, for centuries, she held Ireland in disaffected subjection to her rule; or was she not rather weakened, by offering, in the sister island, a vulnerable point of attack to her continental enemies?

But supposing, merely by way of argument, that Russia meditated hostile views towards our eastern colonies.

Constantinople is about three thousand miles distant from Calcutta: are our Indian possessions of such value to the British people that we must guard them with operations so extended and so costly as would be necessary if the shores of the Bosphorus are to be made the outpost for our armies of the Ganges? Surely it becomes a momentous question, to the already over-burdened people of England, to ascertain what advantages are to be reaped from enterprises like this, which, whatever other results they may chance to involve, are certain to entail increased taxation on themselves.

Nothing, we believe, presents so fair a field for economical



analysis, even in this age of new lights, as the subject of colonisation. We can, of course, only briefly allude to the question; but, in doing so, we suggest it as one that claims the investigation of independent public writers, and of all those members of the legislature who are of and for the people, distinct from selfish views or aristocratic tendencies.

Spain lies, at this moment, a miserable spectacle of a nation whose own natural greatness has been immolated on the shrine of Trans-Atlantic ambition. May not some future historian possibly be found recording a similar epitaph on the tomb of Britain?

In truth, we have been planting, and supporting, and governing countries upon all degrees of habitable, and some that are not habitable, latitudes of the earth's surface; and so grateful to our national pride has been the spectacle, that we have never, for once, paused to inquire if our interests were advanced by so much nominal greatness. Three hundred millions of permanent debt have been accumulated—millions of direct taxation are annually levied—restrictions and prohibitions are imposed upon our trade in all quarters of the world, for the acquisition or maintenance of colonial possessions; and all for what? That we may repeat the fatal Spanish proverb—"The sun never sets on the King of England's dominions." For we believe that no candid investigator of our colonial policy will draw the conclusion that we have derived, or shall derive, from it advantages that can compensate for these formidable sacrifices.

But we are upon the verge of a novel combination of commercial *necessities* that will altogether change the relations in which we have hitherto stood with our colonies. We call them necessities, because they will be forced upon us, not from conviction of the wisdom of such changes, but by the irresistible march of events. The New World is destined to become the arbiter of the commercial policy of the Old. We will see in what manner this is in operation.

At the passing of the Negro Emancipation Act, an effort was made by the merchants of Liverpool, trading to South America, to prevail on the Legislature to abolish the discriminating duties on West India sugar, which operated so severely on the trade with the Brazils. It was finally decided that the bounty in favour of the importation of our colonial productions should be continued for ten years. At the end of this period, *if not long before*, therefore, the monstrous impolicy of sacrificing our trade with a new continent, of almost boundless extent of rich territory, in favour of a few small islands, with comparatively exhausted soils, will cease to be sanctioned by the law. What will then follow? If we no longer offer the exclusive privileges of our market to the West Indians, we shall cease, as a matter of justice and necessity, to compel them to purchase exclusively from us. They will be at liberty, in short, to buy wherever they can buy goods cheapest, and to sell in the dearest market. They must be placed in the very same predicament as if they were not a part of his Majesty's dominions. Where, then, will be the semblance of a plea for putting ourselves to the expense of governing and defending such countries? Let us apply the same test to our other colonies.

It is no longer a debateable question, amongst enlightened and disinterested minds, that the privileges which we give to the Canadian exporters of timber to Britain, and by which alone we command a monopoly of that market for our manufactures, are founded on gross injustice to the people of this country, and are calculated to give a forced misdirection, as all such bounties are, to the natural industry of these colonies, by causing the investment of capital in the preparing and shipping of inferior timber, which would otherwise seek its legitimate employment in the pursuit of agriculture. This monopoly must yield to the claims of the United States and Baltic trades. Nor have we been contented with sacrificing our own interests to the promotion of a fictitious prosperity in our colonies, but we destroy the interests of one of these, in the vain hope of benefiting

another. Thus, in the same spirit of withering protection, we have awarded to the West Indies a monopoly of the trade to Canada, whilst, to the latter, we give the privilege of exclusively supplying the former with corn and timber:\* and all this whilst, at the same time, these islands lie within half the distance of the shores of the United States, whose maritime districts possess all the identical exchangeable products with Canada, and teem with a population of industrious and enterprising people, eager for a commerce with these prohibited people.

True, the Government of the United States has lately compelled us, in *self-defence*, to relax from this system; and every one now sees that the same motive prescribes that the commerce of the West Indies be wholly, and without restriction, thrown open to the people of the neighbouring continent, from which it has hitherto been shut out only by means of unnatural prohibitions.

We have said that the New World is the arbiter of the commercial policy of the Old; and we will now see in what way this is the fact in the case of our East Indian trade. Hitherto it has been the custom to impose discriminating duties in favour of the products of these colonies; and this, and this only, has given us the right to compel these dependencies, in return, to restrict themselves to the purchase of our manufactures. We have seen that this restrictive policy must be abandoned in the case of the West Indies and Canada, and still less shall we find it practicable to uphold it in the East. Our leading imports from this quarter must be cotton-wool, silk, indigo, and sugar. The last of these articles, as we have already shown in speaking of the West Indies, the Brazils have, by its successful culture, forced us to remove from the list of protected commodities; whilst the three first, being raw products, in the supply and manufacture of which we are so closely checkmated by the competition of the United States or of

\* [These monopolies have, of course, long since been abolished.]

European countries, it would be madness to think of subjecting the fabrication of them to restrictive duties, however trifling.

We shall then be under the necessity of levying the same duties on the cotton, sugar, &c., imported from the East Indies, as on similar products coming from North or South America; and it will follow, of course, that, as we offer no privileges in our markets to the planters of Hindostan, we can claim none for our manufacturers in theirs. In other words, they must be left at liberty to buy wherever they can purchase cheapest, and to sell where they can do so at the dearest rate; they will, in all respects, be, commercially and fiscally speaking, the same to us as though they did not form a part of his Majesty's dominions. Where then will be the plea for subjecting ourselves to the heavy taxation required to maintain armies and navies for the defence of these colonies?

Provided our manufactures be cheaper than those of our rivals, we shall command the custom of these colonies by the same motives of self-interest which bring the Peruvians, the Brazilians, or the natives of North America, to clothe themselves with the products of our industry; and, on the other hand, they will gladly sell to us their commodities through the same all-powerful impulse, provided we offer for them a more tempting price than they will command in other markets.

We have thus hastily and incidentally glanced at a subject which we predict will speedily force itself upon the attention of our politicians; and we know of nothing that would be so likely to conduce to a diminution of our burdens, by reducing the charges of the army, navy, and ordnance (amounting to fourteen millions annually), as a proper understanding of our relative position with respect to our colonial possessions.\* We are aware that no power was ever yet known, voluntarily, to give up the dominion over a part of its territory. But if it could be made manifest to the trading and industrious portions

\* [The charges for army, navy, and ordnance, for the year 1865, amounted to £25,280,925.]

of this nation, who have no honours, or interested ambition of any kind, at stake in the matter, that, whilst our dependencies are supported at an expense to them, in direct taxation, of more than five millions annually, they serve but as gorgeous and ponderous appendages to swell our ostensible grandeur, but, in reality, to complicate and magnify our government expenditure, without improving our balance of trade—surely, under such circumstances, it would become at least a question for anxious inquiry with a people so overwhelmed with debt, whether those colonies should not be suffered to support and defend themselves, as separate and independent existences.

Adam Smith, more than sixty years ago, promulgated his doubts of the wisdom and profitableness of our colonial policy—at a time, be it remembered, when we were excluded, by the mother countries, from the South American markets, and when our West Indian possessions appeared to superficial minds an indispensable source of vast wealth to the British empire. Had he lived to our day, to behold the United States of America, after freeing themselves from the dominion of the mother country, become our largest and most friendly commercial connection—had he lived also to behold the free states of South America only prevented from outstripping in magnitude all our other customers by the fetters which an absurd law of exclusive dealing with those very West Indian Colonies has imposed on our commerce—how fully must his opinions have coincided with all that we have urged on this subject !

Here, let us observe, that it is worthy of surprise how little progress has been made in the study of that science of which Adam Smith was, more than half a century ago, the great luminary. We regret that no society has been formed for the purpose of disseminating a knowledge of the just principles of trade. Whilst agriculture can boast almost as many associations as there are British counties; whilst every city in the kingdom contains its botanical, phrenological, or mechanical institutions, and these again possess their periodical journals

(and not merely these, for even *war* sends forth its *United Service Magazine*), we possess no association of traders, united together for the common object of enlightening the world upon a question so little understood, and so loaded with obloquy, as free trade.

We have our Banksian, our Linnæan, our Hunterian Societies; and why should not at least our greatest commercial and manufacturing towns possess their Smithian Societies, devoted to the purpose of promulgating the beneficent truths of the "Wealth of Nations?" Such institutions, by promoting a correspondence with similar societies that would probably be organised abroad (for it is our example, in questions affecting commerce, that strangers follow), might contribute to the spread of liberal and just views of political science, and thus tend to ameliorate the restrictive policy of foreign governments, through the legitimate influence of the opinions of their people.

Nor would such societies be fruitless at home. Prizes might be offered for the best essays on the corn question; or lecturers might be sent to enlighten the agriculturists, and to invite discussion upon a subject so difficult and of such paramount interest to all.

The question of the policy or justice of prohibiting the export of machinery might be brought to the test of public discussion; these, and a thousand other questions might, with usefulness, engage the attention of such associations.

But to return to the consideration of the subject more immediately before us.

It will be seen from the arguments and facts we have urged, and are about to lay before our readers, that we entertain no fears that our interests would be likely to suffer from the aggrandisement of a Christian power at the expense of Turkey, even should that power be Russia. On the contrary, we have no hesitation in avowing it as our deliberate conviction, that not merely great Britain, but the entire civilised world, will have reason to congratulate itself, the moment when that territory

again falls beneath the sceptre of any other European power whatever. Ages must elapse before its favoured region will become, as it is by nature destined to become, the seat and centre of commerce, civilisation and true religion ; but the first step towards this consummation must be to convert Constantinople again into that which every lover of humanity and peace longs to behold it—the capital of a Christian people. Nor let it be objected by more enlightened believers, that the Russians would plant that corrupted branch of our religion, the Greek Church, on the spot where the first Christian monarch erected a temple to the true faith of the Apostles. We are no advocates of that Church, with its idolatrous worship and pantomimic ceremonials, fit only to delude the most degraded and ignorant minds ; but we answer—put into a people's hands the Bible in lieu of the Koran—let the religion of Mahomet give place to that of Jesus Christ ; and human reason, aided by the printing press and the commerce of the world, will not fail to erase the errors which time, barbarism, or the cunning of its priesthood, may have engrafted upon it.

But to descend from these higher motives to the question of our own interests, to which, probably, as politicians, we ought to confine our consideration.

Nothing, we confess, appears so opposed to the facts of experience, as the belief which has been so industriously propagated in this country, that Russia, if she held the keys of the Dardanelles, would exclude all trade from the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmora. The writer so often quoted, says—“On the occupation of the Dardanelles disappears the importance of our possessions in the Levant. They were only valuable because the Turks held these Straits. When Russia is there, they are valueless, and will soon be untenable.” It might be a sufficient reply to these assertions, unsupported by facts or reasoning, to demand of what use will these maritime possessions be to Russia, or any other power, unless for the purposes of trade ? Why did the government of St. Petersburg,



for nearly a century, bend a steady and longing eye on the ports of the Euxine, but for the facilities which the possession of one of them would give to the traffic between the interior provinces of Russia and the Mediterranean?

We write, however, with no motive but to disabuse the public mind on an important question ; and as we prefer in all cases to appeal to facts, we shall here give a few particulars of the rise and progress of the only commercial port of consequence as yet established in the Black Sea.

The first stone of the town of Odessa was laid, by order of Catherine, in 1792.

Previously to this, the Euxine was so little visited by our mariners, that every kind of absurd story was advanced and credited respecting the danger of its navigation : the very name was held to be only synonymous with the black and dismal character of its storms, or the perilous mists that it was imagined constantly shrouded its surface. The Danube was, in a like spirit of credulity, suspected to pour from its channel so vast a deposit of mud as to fill the Black Sea with shoals, that threatened, in the course of a few ages, to convert its waters into dry land ; whilst this river, the noblest in Europe, sealed by Turkish jealousy, thus blotting out, as it were, from commercial existence, that vast pastoral district through which it flowed—this stream, whose course lay almost in the centre of Christendom, was as little known as the great yellow river of China.

Odessa has fully equalled the rapid commercial rise of St. Petersburg, to which only in importance it is now the second in the Russian empire. These two ports, which we are taught to believe belong to the most anti-commercial people, present, singularly enough, the two most astonishing instances in Europe of quick advances in wealth, trade, and population.

This town has latterly been declared a free port, with exemption from taxes ; and, therefore, we cannot but anticipate for it a much more rapid career in the time to come.

The population of Odessa is estimated at 40,000 souls. The



exportation of tallow has increased in two years twenty-fold, thus civilising and enriching extensive districts which must have remained in comparative barbarism, had not this outlet been found for their produce. During the same time the breed of sheep has been much improved in these vast southern regions of the Russian territory by the introduction of the merinoes, and the consequent increase of the export of wool has been very considerable.

The amount of imports is stated at 30,000,000 roubles.

We subjoin a statement of the movement of Russian and British shipping at this port, to show that here, as at St. Petersburg and elsewhere, the commerce of England finds a proportionate extension with the trade of other countries.

## SHIPPING AT ODESSA.\*

Vessels.	1826.		1827.		1828.		1829.		1830.		1831.	
	Arrived.	Sailed.	Arrived.	Sailed.	Arrived.	Sailed.	Arrived.	Sailed.	Arrived.	Sailed.	Arrived.	Sailed.
Russian.	164	111	167	122	50	38	24	38	172	194	155	136
British...	104	105	155	143	4	8	65	43	147	169	81	83

Already have its merchants appeared as our customers on the Exchange of Manchester; and it only requires that we remove our suicidal restrictions on the import of corn, to

\* M'Culloch's Dictionary, p. 858; a work of unrivalled labour and usefulness, which ought to have a place in the library of every merchant or reader who feels interested in the commerce and statistics of the world. We will quote from another part of this valuable work, the opinion of the author upon the influences of Russian sway in this quarter:—"On the whole, however, a gradual improvement is taking place; and whatever objections may, on other grounds, be made to the encroachments of Russia in this quarter, there can be no doubt that, by introducing comparative security and good order into the countries under her authority, she has materially improved their condition, and accelerated their progress to a more advanced state."—P. 1108,

render Odessa ultimately one of the chief contributors to the trade of Liverpool.

The influence of Russia, since she has gained a settlement on the shores of the Euxine, has been successfully exercised in throwing open the navigation of its waters, with those of the Danube, to the world; and this noble river has at length been subjected to the dominion of steam, which will, beyond all other agents, tend most rapidly to bring the population of its banks within the pale of civilisation. A Danube Steam Navigation Joint Stock Company has been projected, and will, in all probability, be in operation next summer; and, as this will give the route from the west of Europe to Turkey, by the way of Vienna, the preference, there is no reason to doubt that eventually this river will enjoy a considerable traffic both of passengers and merchandise.

We have probably said sufficient to prove, from facts, that Russia is not an anti-commercial nation.

We have endeavoured likewise to show that alarms for the safety of our eastern possessions ought not to induce us to go to war to check a movement three thousand miles removed from their capital; and to those who are inspired with fear for our European commerce, from the aggrandisement of Russia, we have answered by showing that Napoleon, when he had all Europe at his feet, could not diminish our trade eight per cent.

What then remains to be urged in favour of the policy of this Government putting its over-taxed people to the cost of making warlike demonstrations in favour of Turkey? At the moment when we write a British fleet is wintering in the Gulf of Vourla, the cost of which, at a low estimate, probably exceeds two millions, to say nothing of living *materiel*; and this is put in requisition in behalf of a country with which we carry on a commerce less in annual amount than is turned over by either of two trading concerns that we could name in the city of London!

But we are to await a regeneration of this Mahometan empire. Our arms, we are told, are not only to defend its territory, but to reorganise or reconstruct the whole Turkish government, and to bestow upon its subjects improved political institutions. Let us here what the pamphlet before us says upon this subject, and let it be borne in mind that the writer's sentiments have been applauded by some of our influential journals—"It is the policy of England which alone can save her: it is therefore no trivial or idle investigation which we have undertaken, since it is her political elements that we have to embody into a new political instrument."—P. 54. Again—"In the capital, in the meanest villages, in the centre of communications, on the furthest frontiers, a feeling of vague but intense expectation is spread, which will not be satisfied with less *at our hands* than internal reorganisation and external independence."—P. 62. Again—"Unless anticipated by visible intervention on the part of England, which will relieve them from the permanent menace of the occupation of the capital, and which *will impose on the Government (!)* the necessity of a change of measures, a catastrophe is inevitable."—P. 63. And again—"An empire which in extent, in resources, in population, in position, and in individual qualities and courage—in all, in fact, save instruction—is one of the greatest on the face of the earth, is brought to look with ardent expectation for the arrival of a foreign squadron, and a body of auxiliaries in its capital, and to expect from their presence *the reformation of internal abuses (!)* and the restoration of its political independence."—P. 73.

To protect Turkey against her neighbour, Russia—to defend the Turks against their own government—to force on the latter a constitution, we suppose—to redress all internal grievances in a state where there is no law but despotism! Here, then, in a word, is the "*trifling succour*" (p. 2) which we are called on to render our ancient ally; and if the people of Great Britain desired to add another couple of hundreds of

millions to their debt, we think a scheme is discovered by which they may be gratified, without seeking for quarrels in any other quarter.

If such propositions as these are, however, to be received gravely, it might be suggested to inquire, would Russia, would Austria, remain passive, whilst another power sent her squadrons and her armies from ports a thousand miles distant to take possession of the capital and supersede the government of their adjoining neighbour? Would there be no such thing as Russian or Austrian jealousy of British aggrandisement, and might not our Quixotic labours in behalf of Mahometan regeneration be possibly perplexed by the co-operation of those Powers? These questions present to us the full extent of the dilemma in which we must be placed, if we ever attempt an internal interference with the Ottoman territory. *Without* the consent and assistance of Russia and Austria, we should not be allowed to land an army in that country. We might, it is true, blockade the Dardanelles, and thus at any time annihilate the trade of Constantinople and the Black Sea. But our interests would suffer by such a step; and the object of intermeddling at all is, of course, to benefit, and not destroy our trade. We must, then, if we would remodel Turkey, act in conjunction with Russia, Austria, and France. Would the two former of these powers be likely to lend a very sincere and disinterested co-operation, or must we prepare for a game of intrigues and protocols? \*

\* We here give an extract from the correspondence of a London morning paper, upon the affairs of Greece, that is illustrative of the case in hand:—

“*Nauplia*, Nov. 28, 1834.—If we (the English people) had not been paying for fleets, destroyers of fleets, protocols, loans, extraordinary ambassadors, presidents, couriers, subsidies, &c., in the Levant, we might not have been surprised at the present state of things. But taking into account the talents of Palmerston and S. Canning, and the straightforward, open, John Bull policy of their agent here, really it is wonderful how they can have allowed the other powers to have made such a mess of the business. But the worst part of the affair is, that things are quite as complicated now as they were a week after the breaking out of the Revolution. Here we have a fleet reaching from Gibraltar

These are the probable consequences of our interposing in the case of Turkey ; and, from the danger of which, the only alternative lies in a strict neutrality. We are aware that it would be a novel case for England to remain passive, whilst a struggle was going on between two European powers ; and we know, also, that there is a predilection for continental politics amongst the majority of our countrymen, that would render it extremely difficult for any administration to preserve peace under such circumstances. Public opinion must undergo a change ; our ministers must no longer be held responsible for the every-day political quarrels all over Europe ; nor, when an opposition member of Parliament, or an opposition journalist,\* wishes to assail a foreign secretary, must he be suffered to taunt him with neglect of the honour of Great Britain, if he should prudently abstain from involving her in the dissensions that afflict distant communities.

to the Dardanelles—here we have the Russians as busy as ever—and here we have *not* the proceeds of the loan which our (the British) Government has guaranteed, nor have we a revenue that will pay the interest of it.” Amusingly enough, we find, in another column of the very same copy of the same journal, a letter from its correspondent, dated at Constantinople, Nov. 25, from which the following is extracted :—“ Now is the time to step forward ; a cracking south-wester and a bold front are all that would be wanted ; and our ships once at anchor in the Bosphorus, adieu to the ambitious views of Russia ! They would burst like a child’s bubble. Adieu to the stupid notions about the inevitable dissolution of Turkey. Adieu to the accursed treaty which binds lovely Turkey to a remorseless ravager ! \* \* \* One of her vain finesses is now visible in Austria, where a hired press would make the world believe that Austria is seriously opposed to Russian schemes. It does not require a very long or sharp look-out to see that the two absolute governments are acting in collusion. \* \* \* It is a pretty manœuvre to lead us from the real point of attack—a mere feint ; we must pay no attention to it, but direct all our strength and energy to the true point, Constantinople ; that Constantinople which, once in Russia’s hands, becomes the mistress of Europe.”

\* Extract from a London paper, *October 22, 1834* :—“ As at home, so abroad ; the Whigs have failed in all their negotiations, and not one question have they settled, except the passing of a Reform Bill and a Poor Law Bill. The Dutch question is undecided ; the French are still at Ancona ; Don Carlos is fighting in Spain ; Don Miguel and his adherents are preparing for a new conflict in Portugal ; Turkey and Egypt are at daggers drawn ; Switzerland is

There is no remedy for this but in the wholesome exercise of the people's opinion in behalf of their own interests. The middle and industrious classes of England can have no interest apart from the preservation of peace. The honours, the fame, the emoluments of war belong not to them ; the battle-plain is the harvest-field of the aristocracy, watered with the blood of the people.

We know of no means by which a body of members in the reformed House of Commons could so fairly achieve for itself the patriotic title of a national party, as by associating for the common object of deprecating all intervention on our part in continental politics. Such a party might well comprise every representative of our manufacturing and commercial districts, and would, we doubt not, very soon embrace the majority of a powerful House of Commons. At some future election, we may probably see the test of "*no foreign politics*" applied to those who offer to become the representatives of free constituencies. Happy would it have been for us, and well for our posterity, had such a feeling predominated in this country fifty years ago ! But although, since the peace, we have profited so little by the bitter experience of the revolutionary wars as to seek a participation in all the subsequent continental squabbles, and though we are bound by treaties, or involved in guarantees, with almost every state of Europe ; still the coming moment is only the more proper for adopting the true path of national policy, which always lies open to us.

We say the coming moment is only the more fit for withdrawing ourselves from foreign politics ; and surely there are

quarrelling with her neighbouring states about Italian refugees ; Frankfort is occupied by Prussian troops, in violation of the treaty of Vienna ; Algiers is being made a large French colony, in violation of the promises made to the contrary by France in 1829 and 1830 ; ten thousand Polish nobles are still proscribed and wandering in Europe ; French gaols are full of political offenders, who, when liberated or acquitted, will begin again to conspire. In one word, nothing is terminated." It is plain that, if this writer had his will, the Whigs would leave nothing in the world for Providence to attend to.

signs in Europe that fully justify the sentiment. With France, still in the throes of her last revolution, containing a generation of young and ardent spirits, without the resources of commerce, and therefore burning for the excitement and employment of war; with Germany, Prussia, Hungary, Austria,\* and Italy, all dependent for tranquillity upon the fragile bond of attachment of their subjects to a couple of aged paternal monarchs; with Holland and Belgium, each sword in hand; and with Turkey, not so much yielding to the pressure of Russia, as sinking beneath an inevitable religious and political destiny—surely, with such elements of discord as these fermenting all over Europe, it becomes more than ever our duty to take natural shelter from a storm, from entering into which we could hope for no benefits, but might justly dread renewed sacrifices.

Nor do we think it would tend less to promote the ulterior benefit of our continental neighbours than our own, were Great Britain to refrain from participating in the conflicts that may arise around her. An onward movement of constitutional liberty must continue to be made by the less advanced nations of Europe, so long as one of its greatest families holds out the example of liberal and enlightened freedom. England, by calmly directing her undivided energies to the purifying of her own internal institutions, to the emancipation of her commerce—above all, to the unfettering of her press from its excise bonds—would, by thus serving as it were for the beacon of other nations, aid more effectually the cause of political progression all over the continent than she could possibly do by plunging herself into the strife of European wars.

For, let it never be forgotten, that it is not by means of war that states are rendered fit for the enjoyment of constitutional freedom; on the contrary, whilst terror and bloodshed reign in the land, involving men's minds in the extremities of hopes and fears, there can be no process of thought, no education going on, by which alone can a people be prepared for

\* Since writing this, the death of the Emperor of Austria is announced.



the enjoyment of rational liberty. Hence, after a struggle of twenty years, *begun in behalf of freedom*, no sooner had the wars of the French revolution terminated, than all the nations of the continent fell back again into their previous state of political servitude, and from which they have, ever since the peace, been *qualifying* to rescue themselves, by the gradual process of intellectual advancement. Those who, from an eager desire to aid civilisation, wish that Great Britain should interpose in the dissensions of neighbouring states, would do wisely to study, in the history of their own country, how well a people can, by the force and virtue of native elements, and without external assistance of any kind, work out their own political regeneration : they might learn too, by their own annals, that it is only when at peace with other states that a nation finds the leisure for looking within itself, and discovering the means to accomplish great domestic ameliorations.

To those generous spirits we would urge, that, in the present day, commerce is the grand panacea, which, like a beneficent medical discovery, will serve to inoculate with the healthy and saving taste for civilisation all the nations of the world. Not a bale of merchandise leaves our shores, but it bears the seeds of intelligence and fruitful thought to the members of some less enlightened community ; not a merchant visits our seats of manufacturing industry, but he returns to his own country the missionary of freedom, peace, and good government—whilst our steamboats, that now visit every port of Europe, and our miraculous railroads, that are the talk of all nations, are the advertisements and vouchers for the value of our enlightened institutions.

In closing this part of our task, we shall only add, that, whatever other plea may in future be allowed to induce us to embark in a continental conflict, we trust we have proved, that so far as our commerce is concerned, it can neither be sustained nor greatly injured abroad by force or violence. The foreign customers who visit our markets are not brought hither through



fear of the power or the influence of British diplomatists : they are not captured by our fleets and armies : and as little are they attracted by feelings of love for us ; for that “there is no friendship in trade” is a maxim equally applicable to nations and to individuals. It is solely from the promptings of self-interest that the merchants of Europe, as of the rest of the world, send their ships to our ports to be freighted with the products of our labour. The self-same impulse drew all nations, at different periods of history, to Tyre, to Venice, and to Amsterdam ; and if, in the revolution of time and events, a country should be found (which is probable) whose cottons and woollens shall be cheaper than those of England and the rest of the world, then to that spot—even should it, by supposition, be buried in the remotest nook of the globe—will all the traders of the earth flock ; and no human power, no fleets or armies, will prevent Manchester, Liverpool, and Leeds, from sharing the fate of their once proud predecessors in Holland, Italy, and Phoenicia.\*

\* Lest it might be said that we are advocating Russian objects of ambition, we think it necessary to observe, that we trust the entire spirit of this pamphlet will show that we are not of *Russian politics*. Our sole aim is the *just interests* of England, regardless of the objects of other nations.

## IRELAND.

WHILST within the last twenty years our sympathies have gone forth over the whole of Europe in quest of nations suffering from, or rising up against the injustice of their rulers ; whilst Italy, Greece, Spain, France, Portugal, Turkey, Belgium, and Poland, have successively filled the newspapers with tales of their domestic wrongs ; and whilst our diplomatists, fleets, and armies have been put in motion at enormous cost, to carry our counsel, or, if needful, our arms, to the assistance of the people of these remote regions ; it is an unquestionable fact, that the population of a great portion of our own empire has, at the same time, presented a grosser spectacle of moral and physical debasement than is to be met with in the whole civilised world.

If an intelligent foreigner, after having travelled through England, Scotland, and Wales, and enjoyed the exhibition of wealth, industry, and happiness, afforded everywhere by the population of these realms, were, when upon the eve of departing for the shores of Ireland, to be warned of the scenes of wretchedness and want that awaited him in that country, he would naturally assume the cause in some such question as this :—"The people are no doubt indolent, and destitute of the energy that belongs to the English character?" If it were answered, that, so far from such being the case, the Irish are the hardiest labourers on earth ; that the docks and canals of England, and the railroads of America are the produce of their toil ; in short, that they are the hewers of wood and the drawers of water for other nations—then the next inquiry from this stranger would probably be in some such form as this :—"But

their soil no doubt is barren, and their climate inhospitable: nature has besides, probably, denied to them the rivers and harbours which are essential to commerce?" What would be his surprise to be answered, that, in natural fertility, and in the advantages of navigable streams, lakes, and harbours, Ireland is more favoured than England, Scotland, or Wales.\*

Where, then, shall we seek for the causes of the poverty and barbarism that afflict this land? How shall we be able to account for the fact, that commerce and civilisation, which have from the earliest ages journeyed westward, and in their course have even stayed to enrich the marshes of the Adriatic and the fens of Holland, should have passed over in their flight to the New World a spot more calculated by nature than almost any other besides, to be the seat of a great internal and external trade?

We do not profess to be able to disclose all the precise causes of the depressed fate of Ireland; still less do we pretend to offer a panacea for all the ills that afflict her. Our object in introducing the subject here is, to show the absurdity and injustice of that policy which leads us to seek amongst other nations for objects of compassion and care, and to neglect the urgent demands that are made upon us at our very door.

The strongest ground of grievance that we have ever heard alleged against us by intelligent Irishmen, unimbued with party feelings, is the total neglect and ignorance of their country that

\* "And sure it is yet a most beautiful and sweet country as any is under heaven, being stored throughout with many goodly rivers, replenished with all sorts of fish most abundantly, sprinkled with many very sweet islands and goodly lakes, like inland seas that will carry even shippes upon their waters; adorned with goodly woods, even fit for building of houses and shippes so commodiously, as that, if some princes in the world had them, they would soon hope to be lords of all the seas, of all the world; also full of very good ports and havens opening upon England, as inviting us to come into them, to see what excellent commodities that country can afford; besides, the soyle itselfe fit to yeeld all kinde of fruit that shall be committed thereunto. And lastly, the heavens most mild and temperate, though somewhat more moist than the parts towards the east."—*Spenser*.

prevail amongst the people of England. To the middle classes of this country, as to an impartial tribunal, untainted by the venom of their political and religious factions, a large portion of the Irish people look for the probable regeneration of their unhappy country. Without this tardy effort of justice at our hands, they will never be able to escape from the vortex of their social distractions. This patriotic party, including so much of the intelligence and industry of Ireland, claim from their fellow-subjects on this side of the Channel (and they have a right to claim it), such a consideration of their country, its population and resources, its history, institutions, and geography—in fact, just such a study of Ireland as shall give them a knowledge of its anomalous physical and moral state.

It is almost incredible how little is known of this, one of the largest both in area and population, of the four divisions of the kingdom. Let any one of our readers take a person of average intelligence, and ask him which is the finest river of the United Kingdom; he will answer, probably, the Thames, the Humber, or the Severn; it is ten to one against his naming the Shannon.

We will venture to say that there are as many individuals in England conversant with the city of New York and the course of the Hudson, as there are who are acquainted with the topography of Limerick, and the banks of the largest river in the British Empire.

The past fate of Ireland, like the present condition of its people—presents to our view an anomaly that has no parallel in the history of nations. During all that period of time which has sufficed to bring the other states in Europe to emerge from barbarism—some to attain their zenith of glory, and again decay, others to continue at the summit of prosperity—Ireland has never enjoyed one age of perfect security or peace. She has, consequently, unlike every other nation, no era of literature, commerce, or the arts to boast of; nay, she does not exhibit, in her annals, an instance in which she has put forth in war a

combined force to merit even the savage honours of military or naval fame.

Poets have feigned a golden age for this, as for every other country ; but it never existed except in the pages of romance. Ireland never was, at any known period of her history, more tranquil or happy than at this day. She has from the first been the incessant prey of discord, bloodshed, and famine.

We, who are fond of digging deep into the foundations of causes, incline to assign as one reason of the adverse condition of this island, the circumstance of the Romans never having colonised it. That people, by deposing the petty chiefs, and gathering and compressing their septs into one communion—by inoculating the natives with a love of discipline—by depositing amongst them the seeds of the arts, and imparting a taste for civilisation—would probably have given to them that unity and consistency, as one people, the want of which has been the principal source of all their weakness and misfortune. Had the Romans occupied for three centuries such a country as this, they would perhaps have left it, on their departure from Britain, more advanced in all respects than it proved to be in the sixteenth century.

But whatever were the causes of the early degradation of this country, there can be no doubt that England has, during the last two centuries, by discouraging the commerce of Ireland—thus striking at the very root of civilisation—rendered herself responsible for much of the barbarism that at the present day afflicts it.

However much the conduct of England towards the sister island, in this particular, may have been dwelt upon for party purposes, it is so bad as scarcely to admit of exaggeration.

The first restrictions put upon the Irish trade were in the reign of Charles II. ; and from that time down to the era when the United Volunteers of Ireland stepped forward to rescue their country from its oppressors (the only incident, by the way, in the chronicles of Ireland, deserving the name of a really

national effort), our policy was directed incessantly to the destruction of the foreign trade of that country. Every attempt at manufacturing industry, with one exception, was likewise mercilessly nipped in the bud. Her natural capabilities might, for example, have led the people to the making of glass; it was enacted that no glass should be allowed to be exported from Ireland, and its importation, except from England, was also prohibited. Her soil calculated for the pasturing of sheep, would have yielded wool equal to the best English qualities; an absolute prohibition was laid on its exportation, and King William, in addressing the British Parliament, declared that he would "do everything in his power to discourage the woollen manufacture of Ireland." Down to the year 1779, we find that the export of woollen goods from that island remained wholly interdicted.

Not only was her commerce with the different ports of Europe fettered by the imposition of restrictions upon every valuable product that could interfere with the prosperity of England; not only was all trade with Asia and the east of Europe excluded by the charters which were granted to the companies of London; but her ports were actually sealed against the trade of the American colonies. Although Ireland presented to the ships of North America the nearest and the noblest havens in Europe, and appeared to be the natural landing-place for the products of the New World, her people were deprived of all benefit—nay, they were actually made to suffer loss and inconvenience from their favoured position; laws were passed, prohibiting the importation of American commodities into Ireland, without first landing them in some port of England or Wales, whilst the export of Irish products to the colonies, excepting through some British port, was also interdicted.

If we add to this, that a law was enacted, preventing beef or live cattle from being exported to England, some idea may be formed of the commercial policy of this country towards

Ireland—a policy savouring more of the mean and sordid tyranny of the individual huckster over his poorer rival, than of any nobler oppression that is wont to characterise the acts of victorious nations.

Need we wonder that at this moment the entire foreign commerce of Ireland does not much exceed the trade of one second-rate port of Scotland?\*

There are those who think the Irish genius is unsuited to that eager and persevering pursuit of business which distinguishes the English people; and they argue that, but for this, the natives of a region in all respects so favourable to commerce must have triumphed over the obstacles that clogged their industry.

There is, we believe, one cause existing, less connected with the injustice of England, and to which we are about to allude, why Ireland is below us, and other Protestant nations, in the scale of civilisation; yet, if we look to the prosperity of her staple manufacture—the only industry that was tolerated by the Government of this country—it warrants the presumption that, under similar favouring circumstances, her woollens, or, indeed, her cottons, might, equally with her linens, have survived a competition with the fabrics of Great Britain.

But there exists, apart from all intolerant or party feelings on the question, a cause, and we believe a primary one, of the retrograde position, as compared with England and Scotland, in which we find Ireland at the present day, in the circumstance of the Roman Catholic religion being the faith of its people. Let us not be misunderstood—our business does not lie in polemics, and far be it from us to presume to decide which mode of worship may be most acceptable to the great Author of our being. We wish to speak only of the tendency, which, judging from facts that are before us, this Church has to retard the *secular* prosperity of nations.

Probably there is no country in which the effects of the

\* Dundee.

Catholic and Reformed religions upon the temporal career of communities may be more fairly tested than in Switzerland. Of twenty-two cantons, ten are, in the majority of the population, Catholic; eight Protestant; and the remaining four are mixed, in nearly equal proportions, of Protestants and Catholics. Those cantons in which the Catholic faith prevails are wholly pastoral in their pursuits, possessing no commerce or manufacturing industry beyond the rude products of domestic labour. Of the mixed cantons, three\* are engaged in the manufacture of cotton; and it is a remarkable feature in the industry of these, that the Catholic portion of their population is wholly addicted to agricultural, and the Protestant section to commercial pursuits. All the eight Protestant cantons are, more or less, engaged in manufactures.

Nor must we omit to add, which every traveller in Switzerland will have seen, that, in the education of the people, the cleanliness of the towns, the commodiousness of the inns, and the quality of the roads, the Protestant cantons possess a great superiority over their Catholic neighbours; whilst such is the difference in the value of land, that an estate in Friburg, a Catholic canton, possessing a richer soil than that of Berne, from which it is divided only by a rivulet, is worth one-third less than the same extent of property in the latter Protestant district.

Such are the circumstances, as we find them in comparing one portion of the Swiss territory with another. The facts are still more striking if we view them in relation to the States immediately around them.

Switzerland, being an inland district far removed from the sea, is compelled to resort to Havre, Genoa, or Frankfort for the supply of the raw materials of her industry, which are transported by land three, four, or five hundred miles, *through Catholic States*, for the purpose of fabrication; and the goods are afterwards reconveyed to the same ports for exportation

\* Appenzell, St. Gall, and Aargau.



to America or the Levant, where, notwithstanding this heavy expense of transit, and although Switzerland possesses no mineral advantages, they sustain a prosperous competition with their more favoured, but less industrious, neighbours and rivals.

If we refer to France, we shall find that a large depôt of manufacturing industry has been formed upon the extreme inland frontier of her territory on the Rhine, where her best cottons are fabricated and printed, and conveyed to the metropolis, about three hundred miles off, for sale. Alsace, the Protestant district we allude to, contains no local advantages, no iron or coals ; it is upwards of four hundred miles distant from the port through which the raw materials of its manufactures are obtained, and whence they are conveyed, entirely by land, passing through Paris, to which city the goods are destined to be again returned. Thus are these commodities transported, overland, more than seven hundred miles, for no other assignable reason, except that they may be subjected to the labour of Protestant hands.

Germany gives us additional facts to the same purport. If we divide this empire into north and south, we shall find the former, containing Prussia, Saxony, &c., to be chiefly Protestant, and to comprise nearly all the manufacturing and commercial interests of the country ; whilst the latter are principally Catholic, and almost wholly addicted to agriculture. Education, likewise, follows the same law here as in Switzerland ; for, whilst the Catholics amount to about twenty millions, and possess but five universities, the Protestants support thirteen, with only a population of fourteen millions.

If we turn to Catholic Italy, where there is very little manufacturing of any kind, we yet find that the commerce of the country is principally in the hands of foreigners. The merchants of Genoa, Naples, Trieste, &c., are chiefly British, Swiss, or Germans, whose houses, again, have their own agents in the principal interior cities ; so that the trade of the Italian States is in great part transacted by Protestants. We need

scarcely add to these statements the fact, which all are acquainted with, that, in Ireland, the staple manufacture is almost wholly confined to the Protestant province.

We shall probably be reminded of the former commercial grandeur of Spain and the Italian republics. This was, however, to a great extent, the effect of monopolies, which must, from their nature, be of transient benefit to nations, and, moreover, they flourished prior to the complete triumph of the Reformation; and our object is merely to exhibit a comparison between Protestant and Catholic communities of the same period. Besides, Spain and Italy have left no evidences of the enlightened industry of their people—such as are to be seen, for example, to attest the energy of the Dutch, in the canals and dykes of Holland.

We have thus briefly glanced at the comparative conditions of the Catholic and Protestant interests in Europe; and, disclaiming, as we do, any theological purpose, we trust we may demand for our argument, what is not often accorded to this invidious topic, the candid attention of our readers. The above facts, then, go far to prove that, in human affairs at least, the Reformed faith conduces more than Catholicism to the prosperity of nations.

We shall not argue that the welfare of States, any more than of individuals, affords proofs of spiritual superiority; we will admit that it does not; but, if it can be proved from facts (as we think even our intelligent and ingenuous Roman Catholic readers will agree we have done) that the Protestant is, more than the Catholic faith, conducive to the growth of national riches and intelligence, then there must be acknowledged to exist a cause, independent of misgovernment, for the present state of Ireland, as compared with that of Great Britain, for which England cannot be held altogether responsible.

The deficient education of a people is, no doubt, a circumstance that must tend, in these days, when the physical sciences and the arts are so intimately blended with manufacturing

industry, and when commerce itself has become a branch of philosophy, to keep them in the rear rank of civilised nations ; but we think the abhorrence of change that characterises Catholic states, and which we shall find not merely to affect religious observances, but to pervade all the habits of social life, has even a more powerful influence over their destinies.

In proof of this, if we take the pages of Cervantes and Le Sage, and compare the portraits and scenes they have depicted, with the characters, costumes, and customs of the present day, we shall find that the Spanish people are, after the lapse of so many ages, in even the minutest observances, wholly unchanged. On the other hand, if we look into Shakespeare, or examine the canvas of Teniers, we shall find that, during the same interval of time, the populations of Holland and England have been revolutionised in all the modes of life, so as scarcely to leave one national feature of those ages for recognition in our day.

Ireland has clung tenaciously to her characteristics of ancient days.

"There is a great use among the Irish," says Spenser, writing more than two hundred years ago, "to make great assemblies together upon a rath or hill, there to parley, as they say, about matters and wrongs between township and township, or one private person and another."—Vol. viii. p. 399. Now, no person could, by possibility, pass six months in the south of Ireland, during the present year, but he would be certain to witness some gatherings of this nature. But who, that has travelled in that island, can have failed to be struck with that universal feature in the dress of the people—the grea-tcoat? "He maketh his mantle," says Spenser, speaking of the Irish peasant of his time, "his house; and under it covereth himself from the wrath of heaven, from the offence of the earth, and from the sight of men. When it raineth it is his pent-house; when it bloweth, it is his tent; when it freezeth, it is his tabernacle. In summer, he can wear it

loose ; in winter, he can wrap it close ; at all times, he can use it ; never heavy, never cumbersome.”—P. 367. We have ourselves seen the Irish of our own day, in the midst of winter, wrapping the mantle close, and we have seen them spreading it loosely in summer ; we have seen the peasant, whilst at plough, obliged to quit one of the stilts every minute for the purpose of adjusting the great-coat that was tucked clumsily round his loins ; and we have beheld the labourer at work, with his mantle thrown inconveniently over his arms and shoulders ; but we have never witnessed it thrown aside. In truth, it is still the mantle that “hides him from the sight of men ;” for, like charity, it cloaks a multitude of defects in the garments beneath.

But it is not in mere externals that we shall find the character of Irish society unchanged. In the manifestations of the passions, in the vehement displays of natural feeling, there is, amidst the general amelioration of the surrounding world, alas ! no improvement here. To quote again from the pages of Spenser, an eye-witness :—“I saw an old woman, which was his foster-mother, take up his head, whilst he was quartered, and sucked up all the bloode that runne thereoute, saying, that the earthe was not worthy to drinke it ; and therewith, also steeped her face and breast, and tore her hair, crying out and shrieking most terribly.”—*Ibid.* p. 381.

Let us compare the above scene, which was enacted at the execution of one of the turbulent natives of the sixteenth century, with the following incident that occurred at the late Rathcormac tithe tragedy :—

“I went up to inspect the haggart where the carnage occurred, and so awful a spectacle I never witnessed ; the straw, all saturated with human gore, so that blood oozed through on the pressure of the foot ; and, shocking to relate, the widow Collins was seen to kiss the blood of her sons, imprecating God’s vengeance on the murderers of her children.”—*Dub. Ev. Post*, Dec. 23, 1834.

Who would imagine that more than two centuries have elapsed between the dates when these parallel occurrences took place in one and the same country?

Viewing, as we confessedly do, the Roman Catholic religion to be a great operating cause against the amelioration of the state of Ireland, it becomes an interesting question, how it happens that we find its dogmas to be professed with so much zeal at the present day in that country. How does it arise, that whereas, during the last three centuries, history exhibits nation after nation yielding up its religion to those reforms which time had rendered necessary, until nearly the whole of northern and western Europe has become Protestant—Ireland, notwithstanding so much contiguous change, still clings, with greater devotion than ever, to the shattered tiara of Rome? That such is the case is proved by the evidence of a trustworthy author, whose recent travels in Ireland we shall have occasion to allude to.\*

We fervently believe that persecution—perhaps honestly devised, but still persecution—has done for this Church what, under the circumstances, nothing besides could have achieved; it has enabled it to resist, not only unscathed, but actually with augmented power, the shocks of a free press, and the liberalising influence of the freest constitutional government in Europe.

We shall be told that the epithet persecution no longer applies, since all civil disabilities are removed from our Catholic fellow-subjects; but, we ask, does it not still apply as much in principle, though not in degree, to the present condition of the

\* “In no country is there more bigotry and superstition among the lower orders, or more blind obedience to the priesthood; in no country is there so much intolerance and zeal among the ministers of religion. I do believe, that at this moment Catholic Ireland is more rife for the re-establishment of the Inquisition than any other country in Europe.”—*Inglis' Travels in Ireland*. See the same traveller's description of Patrick's Purgatory, Loch Dergh. It adds weight to the testimony of this writer upon such a subject, when it is recollected that he is the author of “*Travels in Spain*.”

Irish Church—where six millions of Catholics are forced to see the whole tithe of their soil possessed by the clergy of one million of Protestants—as it did to the persecutions of the ancient martyrs, or to the auto-da-fés of modern Spain? Is not the spirit of persecution the same, but modified to meet the spirit of the age?

If we would bring this case home to our own feelings, let us suppose that the arms of the United States of America were to achieve the conquest of Great Britain; we will further suppose that that country possessed an established church differing in faith from our own—for instance, let it be imagined to be of the Unitarian creed. Now, then, we put it to the feelings of our countrymen, would they, or would they not, regard it as persecution, if they saw the whole of the tithes of England diverted from their present uses, to be applied to the support of a faith which they abhorred? Would it not be felt as persecution to be compelled, not only to behold their cathedrals and churches in the hands of the ministers of a (by them) detested creed, but the lands and revenues which appertained to them, wrested from their present purposes, by the force of a Government on the other side of the ocean? And, seeing these things, would it not be felt and suffered as persecution, if the people of England, still clinging to a man to their national Church, were impelled by conscience to erect other temples of worship, and out of their own pockets to maintain their ejected and despised ministers?

But to come to the still more important question, we appeal to the breasts of our readers, would they, under such circumstances, be likely to become converts to the religion of their spoilers and oppressors? or would they not more probably nourish such a spirit of resentment and indignation as would render impossible a calm or impartial examination of its dogmas? And would not their children and their children's children be taught to abhor, even before they could understand, the very name of Unitarianism? But, pursuing our

hypothesis, supposing all this to occur in England, and that the nation were compelled, by the presence of a sufficient army, to submit—what would the probable effects of such a state of things be upon the peace and prosperity of the community? However excellent might be the laws and institutions, however liberal and enlightened the policy, in other respects, of the government set over us by the Americans, whatever commercial advantages might be derived from a complete incorporation with the United States—would the people, the church-loving people of those realms, be found to be quietly and successfully pursuing their worldly callings, forgetting the grievances of their consciences? We hope not! For the honour of our countrymen we fervently believe that all worldly pursuits and interests would be, by them, and their sons, and their sons' sons, even down to the tenth generation, abandoned; that agitation would be rife in the land, and that every county in England would put forth its O'Connell, wielding the terrible energies of combined freemen, until the time that saw such monstrous tyranny abated!

Persecution may be, as it often has been, the buttress of error; but all history proves that it can never aid the cause of truth.

What has preserved the Jews a distinct people, scattered as they have been amidst all the nations of the earth? No miracle, certainly; for they are now dissolving into the ranks of Christians before the sun of American toleration;\* and our country, but especially the spot where we write, gives us a similar beneficent example in comparison with other States. Nothing more than the universal and unintermitted series of oppressions that characterised the conduct of every Government towards that despised people, from the destruction of

\* In the United States a Jew can hold all offices of State; he may by law become the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Chief Justice, or even President. An American naval commander of the Hebrew faith was, upon one occasion, introduced to George IV.



Jerusalem down to the last century, can be necessary to account for the fact that the Hebrew people exceed, perhaps, at this moment, in numbers, the population of Judæa at the most flourishing period of its history. Nor, if it were desired, during the eighteen centuries to come, to preserve the Jews a separate people, could the wit or the philosophy of man devise a scheme to prevent their amalgamating with the nations of the earth, other than by preserving in the same infallible course of persecution.

Let them search the annals of religious persecution (and it is the most humiliating chapter in the history of poor human nature), and we will challenge the advocates of coercive dealings in matters of conscience to produce an instance where violence, bribery, or secular power in any form, has ever aided the cause of true religion. To the honour of the immaterial portion of our being, although the body may be made to yield to these influences, the soul, disdaining all mortal fetters, owes no allegiance but to itself and its Maker.

So long, then, as the Church of England possesses the whole of the religious revenue of Ireland, there cannot be—nay, judging of the case as our own, there ought not to be—peace or prosperity for its people; and, what is of still more vital importance, there can be, judging by the same rule, no chance of the dissemination of religious truth in that country.

*Let us not be met by those unthinking persons who view tithes as religion*, with the cry about the destruction of the Protestant Church; we are of that Church; and we reckon it amongst the happiest circumstances of our destiny that Providence has placed us in a Protestant land. In our opinion—and we have endeavoured to prove it from the homely, but incontrovertible arguments of facts—no greater temporal misfortune can attach to a people of the present age than to profess the Roman Catholic religion; and it is in order to give the Irish an opportunity of considering with that *indifferency* which we believe



with Locke is the indispensable prelude to the successful search after truth, the doctrines of our reformed faith, that we would do them the justice, in the first place, of putting them on a perfectly equal footing, as respects matters of conscience, with their Protestant fellow-subjects.

We are not visionary enough to shut our eyes to the vast impediments in the way of such a consummation as we have jumped to. These, however, do not in the least affect the question as to its justice or expediency. The obstacles lie in the House of Peers, and probably in the breast of the King. If the conscience of the latter should be affected with scruples as to the binding nature of the coronation oath, precautions might be taken to prevent a similar future obstacle on the demise of the crown. With respect to the House of Lords, difficulties of a less august nature will have to be encountered ; for why should the fact be concealed, that the Church question, in whichever way agitated, is one that concerns the *interests* of the aristocracy? Hence is the difficulty : that, whereas, we sincerely believe, if a canvass were made from house to house throughout Great Britain, four-fifths of the middle classes of its people would be found at once not interested in the temporalities of the Irish Church, and willing to grant to their Catholic fellow-subjects of Ireland a complete equality of religious privileges ; on the contrary, if an appeal were to be made to the votes of the House of Peers, four-fifths of that assembly would very likely oppose such a measure of justice and peace ; and probably that great majority of its members would be found to be, immediately or remotely, interested in the revenues of that Church.

We would recommend the most ample concessions to be made to countervail the obstacles of self-interest. There is no present sacrifice of a pecuniary nature that will not be an ultimate gain to the middle and working classes of England, if it only tend to pacify and regenerate Ireland.

Viewing the subject as a question of pounds, shillings, and

pence (and it partakes a great deal more of that character than folks are aware of), the people of England would be gainers by charging the whole amount of the Church revenue of Ireland to the Consolidated Fund, if by so doing they were only to escape the expense of supporting an enormous army\* for the service of that country.

But we are, from another motive of self-interest, far more deeply concerned in the tranquillity and improvement of the sister kingdom : for it ought to be borne in view, and impressed upon the minds of the industrious classes of this country, that, unless we can succeed in laying the foundations of some plan for elevating the people of Ireland to an equality with us, they will inevitably depress us to a level with themselves. *There cannot permanently be, in a free community, two distinct castes or conditions of existence, such as are now to be found in this united empire.* Already is the process of assimilation going on ; and the town in which we write furnishes, amongst others, a striking example of the way in which the contagion of Irish habits is contaminating, whilst the competition of that people is depressing, the working classes of Britain.

Manchester is supposed to contain fifty thousand Irish, or

\* STATIONS OF THE BRITISH ARMY IN IRELAND, ON THE 1ST NOVEMBER, 1834. (*From the United Service Journal.*) Those marked thus \* are depots of Regiments. 3rd Dragoon Guards, Dublin ; 4th Dragoon Guards, Cork ; 7th Dragoon Guards, Limerick ; 9th Lancers, Newbridge ; 10th Hussars, Dundalk ; 14th Light Dragoons, Longford ; 15th Hussars, Dublin ; 3rd Battalion Grenadier Guards, Dublin ; 1st Foot, 1st Battalion, Londonderry ; \* 2nd Battalion, Athlone ; 7th, Drogheda ; \* 9th, Youghal ; \* 14th, Mullingar ; 18th, Limerick ; 24th, Kinsale ; \* 25th, Armagh ; \* 27th, Dublin ; 29th, Kinsale ; \* 30th, Clonmel ; \* 43rd, Cork ; 46th, Dublin ; 47th Foot, Boyle ; \* 52nd, Enniskillen ; 56th, Cork ; \* 60th, Nenagh ; 2nd Battalion, Kilkenny ; 67th, Cashel ; \* 69th, Clare Castle ; \* 70th, Cork ; \* 74th, Belfast ; 76th, Boyle ; \* 81st, Dublin ; 82nd, Belfast ; 83rd, Newry ; 85th, Galway ; 89th, Fermoy ; 90th, Naas ; 91st, Birr ; 94th, Cork ; 95th, Templemore ; 96th, Kinsale. Here is an array of bayonets that renders it difficult to believe that Ireland is other than a recently-conquered territory, throughout which an enemy's army has just distributed its encampments. Four times as many soldiers as comprise the standing army of the United States are at this time quartered in Ireland !

the immediate descendants of Irish. The quarter in which they congregate is, like the district of St. Giles's of London, a nursery of all the customs that belong to savage life. In the very centre of our otherwise civilised and wealthy town, a colony which has acquired for its *locale* the title of Little Ireland, exhibits all the filth, depravity, and barbarism that disgrace its patronymic land. Nor is the evil confined within such limits. Its influences are felt in the adulteration of character, and the lowering of the standard of living of our artisans generally: it is a moral cancer, that, in spite of the efforts of science or philanthropy to arrest its progress, continues to spread throughout the entire mass of our labouring population.

No part of England or Scotland is exempt from its share in the natural consequences of this terrible state of degradation to which the people of Ireland are reduced. There is not a village or parish of the kingdom into which its famine-impelled natives do not, at certain periods of the year, penetrate to share the scanty wages of our peasantry; thus dragging them down to their own level, and, in return, imparting to them the sad secrets of their own depraved modes of life.

But great as this evil has hitherto been, it is only a subject of astonishment to us, that the immigration of the Irish people into this portion of the empire has not been more extensive: sure we are, from the accounts we have of the present state of the southern portion of that island, that nothing short of Berkley's wall of brass can for the future save us from an overwhelming influx of its natives.

Let those who are incredulous of our opinion consult the recent work on Ireland, from which we are about to offer an extract or two for the perusal of our readers.

We look upon every writer who directs the attention of the people of England to the *facts* connected with the present state of Ireland as a benefactor of his country. Even should an author, for the sake of being read, or for party purposes, like

Cobbett, throw some exaggeration into his pictures of the horrors of this land, we still view him in the useful capacity of a watchman, sounding the alarm of danger, scarcely too loud, to the indifferent minds of Great Britain. Though, like the hydro-oxygen microscope, when applied to physical objects, his descriptions magnify its social monsters, till their magnitude terrifies the beholder—still the monsters are there: they are only enlarged, and not created. In the purer elements of English society, such evils could not, through whatever exaggerating medium, be discovered.

But the traveller from whom we are about to quote gives intrinsic evidences of not only competent intelligence but strict impartiality and a sincere love of truth. We do not think that he possesses in an eminent degree the organ of causality, as the phrenologists call it; for he attributes as the ultimate cause of the miseries of Ireland the want of employment for its people, not recollecting that this evil must have its cause; but in the qualities of a careful and experienced observer of facts he is unquestionably a competent authority.

These are his words in speaking of the remuneration of labour in Ireland:—"I am quite confident that if the whole yearly earnings of the labourers of Ireland were divided by the whole number of labourers, the result would be under this sum—fourpence a day for the labourers of Ireland."

Again, in speaking of the habitations of the peasantry of Ireland, the following is the description given by the same author:—"The only difference between the best and the worst of the mud cabins is that some are water-tight, and some are not; air-tight, I saw none; with windows, scarcely any; with chimneys—that is, with a hole in the roof for the smoke to escape through—as many perhaps with it as without it. As for furniture, there is no such thing; unless a broken stool or two and an iron pot can be called furniture. I should say that in the greater part of Leinster and Munster, and in the flat districts

of Connaught, bedsteads are far from general, and bed-clothing is never sufficient."

Let us reflect for a moment on what would be the effects upon the condition of our industrious population, if they were brought down to share one common average with these labourers; a fate which, we repeat, they are doomed to suffer, unless by imparting peace and prosperity to Ireland, we shall succeed in elevating her people to our own level.

This intelligent traveller sums up his recital of all that he witnessed during a tour of many months throughout the island (great part of which time he spent in unrestrained intercourse with the peasantry), in these words, which, along with every other portion of his volumes, do equal honour to his moral courage and philanthropy:—

"I, Henry David Inglis, acting under no superior orders, holding no government commission; with no end to serve, and no party to please; hoping for no patronage, and fearing no censure; and with no other view than the establishment of truth—having just completed a journey throughout Ireland, and having minutely examined and inquired into the condition of the people of that country—do humbly report that the destitute, infirm, and aged form a large body of the population of the cities, towns, and villages of Ireland: that, in the judgment of those best qualified to know the truth, three-fourth parts of their number die through the effects of destitution, either by the decay of nature accelerated, or through disease induced by scanty and unwholesome food, or else by the attacks of epidemics, rendered more fatal from the same causes: that the present condition of this large class is shocking for humanity to contemplate, and beyond the efforts of private beneficence to relieve, and is a reproach to any civilised and Christian country."

A Christian country does he say? Posterity will doubt it! There is no such picture as this of a permanent state of national existence to be found in any authentic history, ancient or

modern, Christian or pagan. We shall search the volumes of the most accredited travellers in Russia,\* Turkey,† or India, and find no description of a people that is not enviable, in comparison with the state of millions of our fellow-subjects in Ireland. The natives of Moldavia and Wallachia, which provinces have been the battle-fields for Turks and Christians for centuries, are now living in happiness and plenty, when compared with the fate of the inhabitants of a country that has known no other invader but England.

We lavish our sympathies upon the serfs of Poland, and the slaves of Turkey ; but who would not prefer to be one of these, to the perishing with hunger under the name of freeman ? We send forth our missionaries to convert the heathen ; but well might the followers of Mahomet or Zoroaster instruct us in the ways of charity to our poor Christian brethren !

Far be it from us to say, with a celebrated French writer, that we distrust the philanthropy of all those who seek in distant regions for objects of their charity ; but we put it to our countrymen, whether, in lending themselves to any scheme, having benevolence for remote nations in view, whilst such a case as this stands appealing at their doors, they are not, in the emphatic words of Scripture, “taking the children’s meat and casting it to the dogs.”

We shall be told that the hundreds of thousands of pounds that are sent annually to remote regions are for the promotion

\* Dr. Clarke tells us that the serfs of Russia, when old, are of right supported by the owners of the estate.

† In the Koran, the charities are enjoined : and Tournesfort tells us—“There are no beggars to be seen in Turkey, because they take care to prevent the unfortunate from falling into such necessities. They visit the prisons to discharge those who are arrested for debt ; they are very careful to relieve persons who are bashfully ashamed of their poverty. How many families may one find who have been ruined by fires, and are restored by charities ! They need only present themselves at the doors of the mosques. They also go to their houses to comfort the afflicted. The diseased, and they who have the pestilence, are succoured by their neighbours’ purse.”—*Vol. ii.*, p. 59. The Bible still more strictly commands charity, and—see *Inglis’ Ireland* !

of religion. But there cannot be religion where there is not morality; and can morals survive in a starving community such as exists in Ireland? No! and, therefore, we say, until the above proclamation of her desperate sufferings be controverted (and who will gainsay it?) a copy of it ought to be affixed to every public building, and to the doors of every church and chapel in particular of England; and all attempts, of whatever description, to subsidise the charity of this country, in behalf of alien nations, whilst this member of our own family, in the extremity of want, supplicates for succour at our hands, should be denounced and put aside by the common sense and humanity of the nation.

If not, if for more fanciful, because more distant, projects of benevolence, we neglect our obvious duty towards these our fellow-countrymen, then will the sins and omissions of their fathers be visited upon the future generations of Englishmen for assuredly will the accumulated ills of Ireland recoil upon their heads, until one common measure of suffering shall have been meted out to both!

But we will not forget that our object in entering upon the consideration of this subject was to illustrate the impolicy and injustice of the statesmen of this country, who have averted their faces from this diseased member of our body-politic; and, at the same time, have led us, thus maimed, into the midst of every conflict that has occurred upon the whole continent of Europe. To give one example, let us only recur to the year 1823, when the French invasion of Spain drew forth those well-known powerful appeals of Brougham\* to the ever-ready-

\* In alluding to this eminent, and we fervently believe disinterestedly patriotic, individual, we have no wish to be thought to have caught the contagion of that virulence with which, perhaps from the unworthiest of motives, his character has been latterly assailed. We feel no very great respect for mere eloquence, which, from the time of Demosthenes down to that of the subject of these remarks, has, probably, as often been sacrificed at the altar of falsehood as upon the purer shrine of truth. But Lord Brougham's labours on behalf of popular intelligence, at a time, too, be it always remembered, when the cause of educa-

primed pugnacity of his countrymen, in which he exhausted his eloquence in the cause of war against France; declaring, amongst similar flights, that we ought to spend our last shilling in behalf of Spanish independence; whilst at the very same moment of time famine, pestilence, and insurrection were raging, even to an unparalleled extent, in Ireland, whose natives were driven to subsist on the weeds of the fields, and for whom a subscription fund amounting to more than a quarter of a million was that very year raised by the people of Great Britain.

tion was not, as now, fashionable, places his fame on a monument that is based securely upon the broad and durable interests of the people.

At the very instant of penning this note, we have seen the report of a speech made by Lord Brougham in the House of Lords upon the subject of foreign politics, from which we subjoin an extract, illustrating how little the judgment of this nobleman has profited by the interval since 1823 upon a question on which, unluckily for England, her statesmen have, one and all, been alike infatuated:—"With regard to the change of the sovereign in Austria, he could not avoid expressing his hope that His Majesty's Government would seize upon the opportunity offered by the change of the reigning Sovereign there, and enforce, what *he knew their predecessors had tried to enforce* (!), the humane, and in his conscience he believed the sound, prudent, and politic course, as regarded the individual interest of the Austrian government, imposed upon the government of His Imperial Majesty, to mitigate the rigours, if not to terminate the sufferings, that, for nearly the whole of the last seventeen years, had been inflicted upon some of the ablest, most accomplished, virtuous, and enlightened individuals, the ornaments of the nobility of a part of His Imperial Majesty's dominions. He hoped that an occasion would be taken of enforcing this subject on the attention of the Austrian government, in a manner that became the character, the policy, and the *wisdom* (!) of this country; for he was convinced," &c.—*Morning Chronicle Report, March 11th, 1835.*

The circumstances under which the above was uttered were even still more inopportune than those we alluded to of 1823.

Under the same roof—at the very same instant of time in which an interference with the domestic concerns of a capital nearly a thousand miles distant, and with which we have scarcely more interested connection than with Timbuctoo, was thus invoked—a debate was proceeding in the House of Commons (the malt question), in which it was stated, by several speakers, that three-fourths of the population of this kingdom are plunged in distress and poverty; and in the course of which the Chancellor of the Exchequer declared that he possessed not the power of alleviating such misery; whilst such was the extremity to which this minister of the crown was driven, that he felt impelled to appeal to the honesty of a British Parliament in behalf of the national creditor.



Subsequently, as our readers know, our Government despatched an armament to the succour of Portugal. We witnessed the departure of those troops from London, and well do we remember the enthusiasm of the good citizens on that occasion. In the next meeting of Parliament it was stated that this display of our power and magnanimity towards an old ally cost upwards of a million sterling. Here was a sum that would have sufficed to employ the starving peasantry of Ireland in constructing a railroad fifty miles in length. What fruits have we to exhibit, in the present state of the Peninsula, that can be said to have grown out of this expenditure?

But the worst effects of an intermeddling policy are, that we are induced at all times to maintain an *attitude*, as it is termed, sufficiently formidable, in the face of Europe. Thus, the navy—which, after the peace was very properly reduced, so that in 1817 it comprised only 13,000 seamen and 6,000 marines—was, under the plea of the disturbed state of Europe, from time to time augmented; until, in 1831, the estimate amounted to 22,000 seamen and 10,000 marines; whilst the army, which in 1817 had been cut down to 69,000 men, was, by successive augmentations, raised to 88,000 men in 1831.

Our limits do not allow us to go further into details upon this portion of our task. But we cannot dismiss the subject altogether without a few observations upon the remedies which are proposed for the present state of Ireland. That “every quack has his nostrum for the cure of poor Erin,” is a common remark with her people; and although we find the doctors, as usual, differ exceedingly in opinion, there are two prescriptions which have been very numerously recommended—we allude to a law against absenteeism, and a poor law.

We should hail any measure that promised the slightest relief to the wretched people of this country. But it is necessary to ask, Could these plans, through any law, be efficaciously enforced? There is, we think much raving after impracticable

legislation nowadays. Let us see if these be not specimens of it.

We never yet met with a person who professed to understand how an Act of Parliament could be framed, that, without committing the most grievous injustice and cruelty, would be more than a dead letter against Irish absenteeism. Let us imagine that a law was enacted to compel every owner of an estate in Ireland to reside upon his property. Well, this would be imprisonment for life. No, is the answer: he might range over the whole island, and even reside on the sea-coast, or, for a portion of the year, in Dublin. Good: then he must have a passport, and at every move his person must be cognised; and for this purpose a police, similar to the French *gensdarmierie*, must be organised throughout the country. But the traders, the farmers, the professional men, the tourists, the beggars, the commercial travellers, the strangers—all these, we suppose, would be subjected to the like *surveillance*? Oh, no! must be the reply: that would be to obstruct the entire business of the country. Thus this law falls to the ground, since the landowner might elude it under any of these disguises.

But to approach the subject in another way. The enactment would not, of course, be passed without some clauses of exceptions. It would be barbarous, for example, to prohibit a man from changing his abode, if illness demanded it, or if his wife or children were in that extremity. What, then, would be the market price of a doctor's certificate, to transport a *malade imaginaire* to France or Italy? Again, if a Milesian landlord pined for a trip to London, would not a subpoena to attend some law process be a favourite resource? Or a friend might summon him before a parliamentary committee, or find him comfortable apartments in the rules of the Fleet. Fictitious conveyances, nominal divisions of property, and a thousand other expedients, might be named, for rendering nugatory this law, each one of which would, to a reasonable mind, prove the impracticability of such a measure.

Let those who think that a poor's rate, sufficient to operate as a relief to the pauper population, could be levied in the south of Ireland, peruse Inglis's description of the present state of the province of Connaught. How would the rate be agreed upon, when no one of the wretched farmers would come forward to fix the amount? Or, if they did agree to a levy, who would be bold enough to collect the rate? Who would distribute it, where all are needy of its assistance? But, for the sake of contemplating the probable effects of such a law, let us suppose that these difficulties were got over. We believe that those who recommend a poor law as a remedy for Ireland are imperfectly acquainted with its desperate condition.

The poor's rate of England had, two years ago, in various districts, reached fourteen shillings in the pound; and, in one instance, it absorbed the entire rental of the land; and this occurred in Buckinghamshire, within fifty miles of London, and where there are rich farmers and landowners.

What, then, would be the effects of any poor law in a country where parish after parish, throughout vast districts, contains not an inhabitant who tastes better food than potatoes, or knows the luxury of shoes and stockings, or other shelter than a mud cabin? We dread to contemplate the results which, in our judgment, would follow such an attempt to ameliorate the lot of this population. As soon as a competent provision for the poor were ordered—such as a Christian legislature must assign, if it touch the subject at all—the starving peasantry of Ireland, diverted from their present desperate resources of emigration or partial employment in towns, would press upon the occupiers of the soil for subsistence, with such overwhelming claims as to absorb the whole rental in less than six months. What must follow, but that every person owning a head of cattle or a piece of furniture, would fly to the cities; leaving the land to become a scramble to the pauper population, which, in turn, abandoned to its own passions, and restrained by no laws or government,

would probably divide itself once more into septs, under separate chieftains (the elements of this savage state are still in existence in many parts of the south of Ireland), and commence a war of extermination with each other. The days of the Pale and all its horrors would be again revived ; famine would soon, of necessity, ensue ; the towns would be assailed by these barbarous and starving clans ; and the British Government would once more be called on to quell this state of rapine with the sword.

Such, we conscientiously believe, would be the inevitable consequences of a measure which, to the eye of the uninformed or unreflecting philanthropist, appears to be the most eligible plan for the peace and prosperity of Ireland.

What remedies, then, remain for this suffering country ?

We shall pass by the cry for the repeal of the Union ; because everybody knows that to have been only used as an engine for the purpose of acquiring a power to coerce England into other acts of justice. A Parliament in Dublin would not remedy the ills of Ireland. That has been tried, and found unsuccessful ; for all may learn in her history that a more corrupt, base, and selfish public body than the domestic legislature of Ireland never existed ; and the very first declaration of the United Volunteers, when, in 1781, they took the redress of her thousand wrongs into their own hands, was to the effect, that they resolved to use every effort to extirpate the corruptions that so notoriously existed in the Irish Parliament ; and one of the first acts of the same patriotic body was to invest the Parliament House in Dublin, and at the point of the bayonet, to extort from those native legislators a redress of their country's grievances.

To come, next, to the scheme of emigration. All must regard with feelings of suspicion and disfavour any attempt to expatriate a large body of our fellow-countrymen ; and we hold such an antidote to be only like removing the slough which has arisen from a wound, whilst the disease itself remains untouched.

But, unhappily, the maladies of Ireland have taken such deep root, that legislation cannot hope, for ages to come, effectually to eradicate them ; whilst here is a mode by which hundreds of thousands of our fellow-creatures are eager to be enabled to escape a lingering death. Surely, under such circumstances, this plan, which would leave us room to administer more effectually to the cure of her social disorders, deserves the anxious consideration of our legislature.

Here let us demand why some forty or fifty of our frigates and sloops of war, which are now at a time of peace sunning themselves in the Archipelago, or anchoring in friendly ports, or rotting in ordinary in our own harbours, should not be employed by the Government in conveying these emigrants to Canada, or some other hospitable destination? The expense of transporting an individual from Limerick to the shores of America by such a method would probably not exceed two pounds. On arrival the Government agents might probably find it necessary to be at the charge of his subsistence for a considerable time—perhaps not less than twelve months.

Altogether, however, the expense of a project of emigration, on a scale of magnitude, must be enormous. But, again, we say that any present sacrifice on the part of the people of this country, by which the Irish nation can be lifted from its state of degradation, will prove an eventual gain.

Contemporary with any plan of emigration, other projects for the future amelioration of the fate of that miserable people must be entered upon by the British Parliament ; and we should strongly advocate any measure of internal improvement which, by giving more ready access to the southern portion of the island, would throw open its semi-barbarous region to the curiosity and enterprise of England. Steam navigation has already given a powerful stimulus to the industry of the eastern maritime counties ; and if, by means of railroads, the same all-powerful agent could be carried into the centre of the kingdom, there can be no doubt that English capital and civilisation

would follow in its train. Every one conversant with the subject is aware how greatly the pacification and prosperity of the Scotch Highlands were promoted by carrying roads into these savage districts; and still more recently, how, by means of the steam navigation of the lakes, and the consequent influx of visitors, the people have been enriched and civilised. Similar effects would doubtless follow, if the facilities of railroad travelling were offered to Ireland, whose scenery, hardly rivalled in Europe, together with the frank and hilarious temperament of its people, could not fail to become popular and attractive with the English traveller.

We will here introduce a scheme to the notice of our readers which, whilst we gladly acknowledge with gratitude the source from whence it originated, we think deserves the notice of our Government.

In the *New York Courier and Enquirer* newspaper of December 24, 1834, appeared a letter headed "Traverse Atlantic," which, after stating that the writer, on a recent visit to Europe, had suffered a delay of ten days in ascending the French Channel, from Finisterre to Havre, and of eight days in descending the Irish Channel, from Liverpool to Cape Clear, says, he "believes that on an average one-third or one-fourth of the time is wasted upon every Trans-Atlantic voyage in getting into, or out of, the European ports now resorted to." The writer then proceeds as follows:—

"The commerce of America chiefly centres in the ports of Hamburgh, Havre, London, and Liverpool. Each of these is distant from the ocean and difficult of access. On the western coast of Ireland there are several harbours far superior in every requisite. As, for instance, the island of Valentia, which is the nearest point of land in Europe to America. Between it and the main reposes an excellent receptacle for shipping of any burden, approached by two easily practicable inlets, completely landlocked, capacious, and safe. Situated immediately on the brim of the Atlantic, a perfectly straight line can be drawn

from this harbour to the port of New York, the intervening transit unobstructed by islands, rocks, or shoals. The distance being less than two thousand seven hundred miles may be traversed by steam in about eight days ; and the well-known enterprise of the American merchants renders it unnecessary for me to do more than to intimate that they will avail themselves of every opening or inducement that may arise to establish the first link of intercourse by a line of packet boats. \* \* \* \*

“The extent of this undertaking has been stated as beyond the means of those likely to engage in it. This seems to me incredible, when I advert to the facts that Ireland has a population of eight millions, multitudes of whom are in beggary for want of work, with wages at from fourpence to one shilling a day, and money, on the average, not worth more than three per cent. ; and recollect, at the same time, that the State of South Carolina, one of the smallest in the American Confederation, with a population of three hundred thousand, wages at five shillings sterling a day, and capital at seven per cent. interest, has, unaided, and by private enterprise, constructed a railroad from Charleston to Augusta, one hundred and forty-five miles in extent, at present the longest in the world, which is travelled by locomotive engines in the course of ten hours.

“The advantages to accrue to Ireland in particular by thus opening a regular communication from New York to London in twelve, and to Paris in fifteen days, are incalculable. That island would become, of necessity, the thoroughfare between the two hemispheres : and the occupation of the public mind in such an enterprise, and the constantly increasing fruits of its progress, would do more to pacify the fearful dissensions of the people, and ameliorate their most lamentable condition, than any legislation of even the best disposed Parliament.”

The above project, which, in the affluence of their enterprise, our American friends have suggested for the benefit of

Ireland, merits the attention of the landowners and patriots concerned for the welfare of her people.

It has long been decided by the merchants and nautical, men engaged in the intercourse between Liverpool and America, that steamboats\* would be found capable of navigating the Atlantic with perfect safety ; and the more sanguine amongst those interested in increasing the facilities of communication between the two countries have gone so far as to predict that, in a dozen years' time, we may hope to witness the arrival and departure of steamers twice a week between England and the United States.

As any scheme of this nature must necessarily require that the vessels should take their departure from the nearest points of approximation of the two hemispheres, Ireland would thus become the starting-place for all Europe ; and it is scarcely possible to conceive anything that would be more calculated to enrich and civilise that country than by thus irrigating it, as it were, with the constant tide of emigration to and from America.†

A railway, for the purpose here alluded to, would pass through the centres of Leinster and Munster, intersecting the counties of Kildare, Queen's County, Tipperary, Kilkenny, Limerick, Cork, and Kerry ; and would pass within twenty miles of the port of Limerick, and thirty miles from that of Cork, to both of which cities, it might reasonably be expected, that branches would be carried by public subscription : thus, not only would these two great commercial havens be connected with Dublin, but by opening a direct communication with each other, it would afford a medium for traffic, by steam, between the fifteen counties that are washed by that noble

\* In June, 1819, a steamship crossed the Atlantic from Savannah to Liverpool.

† [In 1858, when the Earl of Eglinton was Lord Lieutenant, the first Irish Trans-Atlantic packet station was established at Galway ; and in about a year later Cork was made a port of call for the Inman steamships, and subsequently for the Cunard line.]



stream, the Shannon, and the ports of Cork and Bristol; and, ultimately, by means of the Great Western Railway, with London.

Railroads are already begun for connecting Liverpool with Southampton, by way of Birmingham and London. The French have long been engaged in making surveys for a railway from Havre, by way of Rouen (the Manchester of France), to Paris; and although characteristic delays may arise to retard the completion of this, as of other projects of mere usefulness, with that fanciful people, yet, as it is, perhaps, the only line in all France that would prove a remunerating speculation, there can be no doubt that it will be the first that is undertaken in that country.

Presuming this to be effected, then, by means of such a plan as is here recommended, for constructing a line from Dublin to the extreme point of Munster, a traveller would be enabled to transport himself from the French metropolis, *viâ* Havre, Southampton, London, Liverpool, and Dublin, to Valencia Island, or any other point of embarkation on that coast, in about sixty hours; and, as the voyage to New York would be accomplished in about eleven or twelve days, the whole distance from Paris to America, which now, upon an average, occupies forty days in the passage, would be accomplished, by the agency of steam, in about a third of that time.

That such a project, if completed, would secure the preference of voyagers to all parts of North America, not only from Britain, but from every quarter of Europe, must be apparent; that all we have recommended is perfectly practicable we have no difficulty in believing; and that a traffic, of such magnitude as is here contemplated, would have the effect of imparting wealth and civilisation to the country through which it passed, all experience proves to be unquestionable.

But it is not merely the future benefit that must accrue to Ireland, from the construction of a railroad through her provinces, that we should alone regard. The present support of

her unemployed peasantry is another cogent motive for some such undertakings; for, unless a diversion of the surplus labour from the land be effected, through the employment of English capital amongst its population, no change can be attempted in the agricultural economy of Ireland. There is not, absolutely in the present densely crowded state of her rural inhabitants, elbow-room, so to speak, sufficient for readjusting their position. Yet there are reforms indispensably requisite to the agricultural prosperity of the island. The farming implements of its people are, for example, notoriously inferior, requiring twice the labour, both of men and cattle, of our own; yet, how shall we hope to see any improvements effected in these, by which the demand for labour shall be temporarily diminished, whilst one-half of the peasantry is perishing for want of work?

Again: the farms are so minutely subdivided, to meet the desperate competition of a people who possess no resource but the land to preserve them from famine, that their occupiers are destitute altogether of capital, and aim at no other end but to secure a daily subsistence on potatoes.

Under a better system, the cultivation of flax might be extended almost indefinitely. At present, the estimated value of the annual production of this raw material of their staple manufacture is about £1,500,000, which is yielded from one hundred thousand acres of land—not one-tenth of the area of a moderate-sized county.\* But how can we apply a remedy to these, or the other evils of the soil, amidst a ferocious and lawless community, that visits with fire and sword† the prædial reformer?

We confess we see no hope for the eventual prosperity of

\* [On June 21st, 1864, the Secretary for Ireland stated that in 1854 there were 151,403 acres under flax cultivation; in 1863, 214,063 acres; and in 1864 about 300,000 acres.]

† The barbarities committed in Ireland as frequently spring out of feuds arising from the competition after land as from disputes upon the question of tithes.

this country, except in the employment of a portion of its people, through the instrumentality of English capital, in the pursuit of manufactures or commerce. Of capital they are literally more destitute, in some parts of the west coast of the island, than are the North American Indians on the banks of the Mississippi ; as an instance in proof of which, it may be stated that, in a recent Government survey of that quarter, a vessel of war was the first to discover some of the finest fishing stations to be found in the British waters ; and yet the natives of the neighbouring shores possess not the means of procuring boats or nets, through which to avail themselves of these treasures !

Capital, like water, tends continually to a level ; and, if any great and unnatural inequality is found to exist in its distribution over the surface of a community, as is the case in this United Kingdom, the cause must, in all probability, be sought for in the errors or violence of a mistaken legislation. The dominant Church, *opposed to the national religion*, is, we conscientiously believe, in this case the primary existing cause of this discrepancy. Capitalists shrink, with all the susceptibility of the barometer in relation to the natural elements, from the storms and tempests of party passion ; but how infinitely beyond all other motives must this privileged class be impelled, by the impulses of feeling and taste, to shun that atmosphere where the strife of religious discord rages with a fury unheard of in any other land !\* There cannot be prosperity for Ireland, until the law, by equalising the temporalities of Catholics and

\* When, at the commencement of the last century, a commission of the most intelligent merchants of Holland drew up, at the request of the Government, a statement of the causes of the commercial prosperity of that country, they placed the following words first in the list of "moral causes" :—" Among the moral and political causes are to be placed—The unalterable maxim and fundamental law relating to the free exercise of different religions ; and always to consider this toleration and connivance as the most effectual means to draw foreigners from adjacent countries to settle and reside here, and so become instrumental to the peopling of these provinces."

Protestants, shall have removed the foundation of this hideous contention.

To this consummation we must be ultimately driven ; for nothing short of this will content the people of Ireland, because less would be short of the full measure of justice. We advocate no spoliation ; let the vested rights of every individual be respected—especially let no part of the tithes fall to the merciless grasp of the landlords of Ireland, who, with many exceptions, may be regarded as the least deserving body of its people. But let the British Parliament assert the right to the absolute disposal of the Irish Church revenues, excepting in cases of private property ; and let an equal government grant be applied to the religious instruction of both faiths, *according to the numbers of each*, as is the rule in France and Belgium\* at the present day.

Such a regulation, by preventing Englishmen from holding benefices in Ireland (there would be no longer the temptations of rich livings and sinecures), would lead to a beneficial influence of the Protestant ministers in that country ; for what could so much tend to destroy all hope of their proselyting the poor Catholics, what in fact could be so much calculated to make those ministers “despised and rejected,” † as to send

\* At the last sitting of the Belgian Chambers, a sum of £400 was voted towards the support of the English chapel ; and a similar amount was granted for the service of the Jewish faith.

† “In planting of religion, thus much is needful to be done—that it be not sought forcibly to be impressed into them with terror and sharpe penalties, as now is the manner, but rather delivered and intimated with mildnesse and gentlenesse, *so as it may not be hated before it be understood, and their professors despised and rejected.* And therefore it is expedient, that some discrete ministers of their owne countrymen be first sent over amongst them, which, by their meeke persuasions and instructions, as also by their sober lives and conversations, may draw them first to understand, and afterwards to imbrace the doctrine of their salvation ; for if that the auncient godly fathers which first converted them, when they were infidells, to the faith, were able to pull them from idolatry and paganisme to the true beliefe in Christ, as St. Patrick and St. Colomb, how much more easily shall godly teachers bring them to the true understanding of that which they already professed? Wherein is the great

amongst them, as is now the case, and ever has been, strangers, who, whatever may be their worth (and we believe the Church of England clergy, *as a class*, to be at this moment about the best body of men in Ireland), are ignorant of the character and habits, nay, even of the very language of the people? What chance have these in competition with the Roman Catholic priesthood, who, drawn from the middle or lower ranks of their countrymen, after an appropriate education in Maynooth College (where are always four or five hundred of such students), are sent back to, perhaps, their native village, to resume the personal and familiar acquaintance of its inhabitants?

Would the spiritual interests of the Scotch people be consulted by displacing their present excellent native pastors in favour of the younger sons of English noblemen?

If it be objected that the English Establishment is involved in the fate of the Church of Ireland, we answer, that the circumstances of the two are as opposite a complexion as light is to darkness. In England, the National Church comprises within its pale a great majority of the people: whilst in Ireland we behold a State religion upheld for the exclusive benefit of one-seventh of its population. Can we on the face of the earth find another example of an established church opposed to the consciences of six-sevenths of its supporters; for although the revenues may not go directly from their pockets, *could the*

wonder to see the oddes that is betweene the zeale of Popish priests and the ministers of the gospell; for they spare not to come out of Spaine, from Rome, and from Remes, by long toyle and dangerous travayling hither, where they know perill of death awayteth them, and no reward or riches is to be found, only to draw the people unto the Church of Rome. Whereas some of our idle ministers, having a way for credite and estimation thereby opened unto them, and having the livings of the country offered unto them, without peines and without perile, will neither for the same nor any love of God nor zeale of religion, nor for all the good they may doe by winning soules to God, bee drawne foorth from their warme nestes to look out into God's harvest, which is even ready for the sickle and all the fields yellow long ago; doubtless those good olde godly fathers will (I fear mee) rise up in the day of judgment to condemne them."—*Spenser*.

*present income of the Protestant Church be raised without the Catholic population?*

What should we say if the Government of Austria, Russia, or Turkey (for each of these has a state religion, differing from ours, and from one another, and yet pronounced by the law of the land to be the only true belief), were found to be applying the whole of the religious revenues of its country to the service of the faith of one-seventh of its subjects? What should we think if the Russian Government were to bestow the entire of the property of the Greek Church upon the Catholic or Armenian fraction of its people? In every country we find the established religion in harmony with the consciences of its people, excepting in Ireland, which, in this, as in other respects, presents to us an anomaly, which has no resemblance amongst the nations of the world.

In concluding our observations upon this portion of our task, we shall briefly ask—Does not the question of Ireland, in every point of view, offer the strongest possible argument against the national policy of this country, for the time during which we have wasted our energies and squandered our wealth upon all the nations of the Continent: whilst a part of our own Empire, which, more than all the rest of Europe, has needed our attention, remains to this hour an appalling monument of our neglect and misgovernment? Add to this, that our efforts have been directed towards the assistance of States for whose welfare we are not responsible; whilst our oppression and neglect have fallen upon a people over whom we are endowed with the power and accountable privileges of government—and the extent of the injustice of our statesmen becomes fully disclosed.

The neglect of those duties which, in such a case devolve upon the governor, as in the instance of every infringement of moral obligations, bears within it the seeds of self-chastisement. The spectacle of Ireland, operating like a cancer in the side of England—of Poland, paralysing one arm of the giant that

oppresses her—of the two millions of negroes in the United States, whose future disposal baffles the ingenuity of those statesmen and philanthropists who would fain wash out this indelible stain upon their religion and government:—these are amongst the lessons which, if viewed properly, serve to teach mankind that no deed of guilt or oppression can be perpetrated with impunity even by the most powerful—that early or late, the invincible cause of truth will triumph against every assault of violence or injustice.

May the middle classes of Great Britain, in whom the government of this country is now vested, profit, in the case of Ireland, by these morals of past history !

## AMERICA.

It is a singular fact that, whilst so much of the time and attention of our statesmen is devoted to the affairs of foreigners, and whilst our debates in Parliament, and the columns of our newspapers, are so frequently engrossed with the politics of petty States, such as Portugal, Belgium, and Bavaria, little notice is taken of the country that ought, beyond all others, to engage the attention, and even to excite the apprehension of this commercial nation.

A considerable portion of our countrymen have not yet reconciled themselves to the belief that the American colonies of 1780 are now become a first-rate independent power. The more aged individuals of this party, embracing, of course, a considerable section of the House of Peers, possess a feeling of half pique and half contempt towards the United States, somewhat analogous to that which the old Scotch Jacobite lady described by Burns indulged with reference to Great Britain more than half a century after it had *rebelled*, as she persisted in designating it, against the legitimate rule of the Stuarts.

We have met with persons of this very respectable and influential party who believe conscientiously that the Americans threw off the yoke of the mother country, merely with a view to escape the payment of certain sums of money due to English creditors;\* and that they have ever since been struggling after a dubious kind of subsistence by incurring fresh debts with us, and occasionally repaying our credulity in no very creditable coin. If

\* "Who could their Sovereign, in their purse, forget,  
And break allegiance but to cancel debt."—*Moore*.



these be told that the people of the United States constitute our largest and most valuable commercial connection—that the business we carry on with them is nearly twice as extensive as with any other people, and that our transactions are almost wholly conducted on ready money terms—they will express surprise; but then they will predict that no good will arise ultimately from trading with Yankee Republicans.

If a word be said about the well-known religious and moral character of the Americans, these worthy people will stop you with the exclamation of, “How can there be religion or morality in a country that maintains no established church?”

Offer to enter into an argument with these spirits of olden time, or to adduce evidence in reference to the present condition of the American States, and ten to one, you will find that they have read the works of no authors or travellers upon that country, with the exception of those of Moore, Mrs. Trollope, and Basil Hall. If the news-rooms and the libraries that are under the direction of this prejudiced party be consulted, the former will be found to contain no specimens of the millions of newspapers that issue, cheap as waste paper, from the press of the United States: whilst, from the shelves of the latter, all books\* calculated to give a favourable picture of the state of its flourishing community are scrupulously excluded.

Should we look into the periodical journals which are under the patronage of the same class, we shall find the United States’

\* An instance of this nature has come to our own knowledge. A gentleman presented to the Lincoln Mechanics’ Institution a copy of Stuart’s work on America (probably the best, because the most matter-of-fact and impartial of all the writers upon that country), which an influential and wealthy individual of the neighbourhood, one of the patrons of the society, induced the committee to reject. We do not feel intolerant towards these errors of judgment, the fruits of ignorance or a faulty education. The only wonder is, in this instance, to find such a character so out of his element as to be supporting a Mechanics’ Institute at all!

news but rarely admitted to their columns, unless it be of a nature that tends to depreciate the character of Republican institutions, or serves as an occasion for quizzing the social peculiarities of American society.

Yet it is to the industry, the economy, and peaceful policy of America, and not to the growth of Russia, that our statesmen and politicians, of whatever creed, ought to direct their anxious study ; for it is by these, and not by the efforts of barbarian force, that the power and greatness of England are in danger of being superseded ; yes, by the successful rivalry of America, shall we, in all probability, be placed second in the rank of nations.

Nor shall we retard, but rather accelerate this fate, by closing our ears, or shutting our eyes, to all that is passing in the United States. We regard it as the first duty of every British statesman, who takes an enlightened interest in the permanent grandeur of his country, however unpalatable the task may prove, to weigh, in comparison with all the features of our national policy, the proceedings in corresponding measures on the other side of the Atlantic. Possibly we may not, after all, be enabled to cope with our more fortunate rivals in the energy or wisdom of their commercial legislation, owing to the embarrassments and burdens with which we are encumbered ; but still, it only the more becomes the character for high moral courage that belongs to us to strive to understand from which quarter danger is the most to be apprehended.

By danger we do not, of course, allude to warlike hostilities. England and America are bound up together in peaceful fetters by the strongest of all the ligatures that can bind two nations to each other, viz., commercial interests ; and which, every succeeding year, renders *more impossible*, if the term may be used, a rupture between the two Governments. This will be sufficiently apparent when we state that a population of upwards of a million of the inhabitants of this country, supported by the various branches of the cotton industry,

dependent for the supply of the raw material upon the United States,\* would be deprived of subsistence ; at the same time that a capital of thirty millions sterling would for the moment be annihilated—if such a catastrophe were to occur as the suspension of the commerce between England and the United States ; whilst the interests of the Americans would be scarcely less vitally affected by the same circumstance.

But we allude to the danger in which we are placed, by being overshadowed by the commercial and naval ascendancy of the United States. It has been through the peaceful victories of mercantile traffic, and not by the force of arms, that modern States have yielded to the supremacy of more successful nations. Thus the power and civilisation of maritime Italy succumbed to the enterprise of Spain and Portugal ; these again were superseded by the more industrious traders of Holland ; who, in their turn, sank into insignificance before the gigantic growth of the manufacturing industry of Great Britain ; and the latter power now sees, in America, a competitor in every respect calculated to contend with advantage for the sceptre of naval and commercial dominion.

Whether we view the rapid advance of the United States, during the last forty years, in respect of population or wealth, it is equally unparalleled in any other age or country. The past history, however, of this country is so well known, indeed, it is compressed into so short a space of recent history, that it would be trite to dwell upon it : our object is to draw a short comparison between the future prospects of the two countries.

The population of the United States was, at the first census, taken in 1790, found to be 3,929,328 ; and, in 1830, the number had, according to the fifth Government return, reached 12,856,171, exhibiting an increase, during the last ten years, of thirty-three per cent. ; that is, doubling itself in rather less

\* The total amount of cotton worked up in this country in 1832 was 277,260,490 lbs., of which no less a proportion than 212,313,690 lbs. was imported from the United States.

than twenty-five years.\* In 1831, the population of the British Islands amounted to 24,271,763, being an increase of about fourteen per cent. upon the enumeration for 1821.† Looking, therefore, to the present proportionate increase of the two countries, and *considering the relative circumstances of each*, it may be predicted that, in thirty years, the numbers of the two people will be about equal; and we further find that, at the same ratio of augmentation, and making no allowance for the probable increase of emigration from Europe, the population of the United States will, in seventy years from this time—that is, during the lifetime of individuals now arrived at maturity—exceed one hundred millions.

These circumstances demonstrate the rapid tendency towards a superiority, so far as numbers go; but we apprehend that, in respect to the comparison of our commercial prospects with those of America, the position of Great Britain does not, according to facts which we have to state, wear a more flattering aspect.

We find, by a table in the “American Almanack” for 1835, that the exports from the United States for the year ending the 25th September, 1833, amounted to 90,140,000 dollars, or about twenty millions sterling of our money.

The British exports for the same period were £47,000,000, of which thirty-six millions were of home commodities or manufactures, whilst the remaining eleven millions consisted of foreign and colonial produce. But it will be proper to exclude the colony trade from the question altogether, unless, in order to state the matter fairly, we agree to take into account, at the same time, the inhabitants of our dependencies, which would not improve our case.

Now, in order to institute a fair comparison between the respective trades of the two countries, it will be necessary to

\* [According to the census of 1860, the population of the United States was 31,676,267.]

† [The population of the United Kingdom in 1861 was 29,346,834.]

bear in mind that, at the above period, the population of America was about fourteen millions, whilst that of the British empire may be reckoned to have been twenty-five and one-half millions.

We arrive, then, at this result, that, whilst our population, as compared with that of the United States, is as  $25\frac{1}{2}$  to 14,\* our commerce bears the proportion from 36 to 20. Further, if we compare the mercantile navy of Britain with that of America, we find the tonnage of the former, in 1832, to have been 2,261,860; whilst that of the latter, in 1833, amounted to 1,439,450 tons; by all which it appears clear that America is, in proportion to its population, at this moment, carrying on as extensive a commerce as England, or any other State in the world.

But we should take a very inadequate view of the comparative progress of the two nations, unless we glanced at other circumstances, which will effect very oppositely the career of England and the United States in their future race of commercial rivalry.

This Republican people presents the only example of past—as we believe it will prove of future—history, in which a nation has honourably discharged its public debt; and the greatest financial pressure its Government will in future have to contend against, singular as the fact may appear to us, is the difficulty of applying its surplus treasure impartially to the services of the separate States. The time is gone by, we believe, when people could be found to argue that a national debt is a national blessing.† Sure we are that, in our case, no person possessing sound reason will deny that we, who find it

\* Bearing in mind that two millions of the American population are negroes, it makes the commerce decidedly in favour of the United States.

† Another fanciful theory upon the subject of the debt, invented, we believe, by Coleridge (it must have been by a *poet*, for the consolation of less ideal minds), has been lately promulgated. We are told that the country is none the worse off for the national debt, because it is all owing to Englishmen; and that, therefore, it is only like drawing off the blood from one part of the body to

necessary to levy upwards of thirty millions annually upon the necessities of life, must be burdened with grievous disadvantages, when brought into commercial competition with the untaxed labour of the inhabitants of America.

But it is not only the load of debt, heavy as that is, that we have to contend with; our oppressive public establishments are, throughout, modelled, *unnecessarily, we believe, for the service of the commonwealth*, upon a scale enormously disproportioned to those of our more economical rivals. We will pass by the whole of our civil expenditure, because we have not space for the detailed notice of its individual items; and we shall proceed to notice, as more connected with the design of this pamphlet, our army and navy, as compared with the military and naval forces of the United States.

We find, from a table in "Reuss's Statistics of the United States," that the number of seamen in the American mercantile navy is estimated at 86,000; whilst the States Government employs, in vessels of war, 6,000\* men. The British merchant service, exclusive of the colonial registry, supports 140,000 sailors; and the number voted for the royal navy, in

inject it into another vein—*it is still all in the system*. We feel sorry to molest so comfortable an illusion.

But does it make no difference in what manner the *outlay* is invested—whether eight hundred millions of capital be sunk in the depths of the sea, or put out to good interest? Is there no difference between such a sum being thrown away, *destroyed, annihilated*, in devastating foreign countries, whilst the nation is called upon, out of its remaining capital, and with its gratuitous labour, to pay the interest—and the like amount being employed in making canals, railways, roads, bridges, drains, docks, &c.; planting trees, educating the people, or in any other way in which it *would return its own interest of capital*?

\* We believe, almost incredible as the fact is even to ourselves, that the British naval *commissioned* officers exceed, by upwards of a thousand, the whole number of the men and officers of the American navy. A comment of a similar tenor, applied to the army of England, is to be found in a following page.

Yet we are in the twentieth year of peace, and every King's speech assures us of the friendly disposition of all foreign powers!

1833, was 27,000 men. Thus, then, we arrive at the unsatisfactory result that, whilst in America the Government, as compared with the merchant service, contains in the proportion of hands rather less than one in fourteen, the number of men employed in the royal navy of Britain, in comparison with the quantity supported by the merchant service, is nearly in the ratio of one to five.

The royal navy of England actually in commission at this time (see the *United Service Magazine* for February) consists of one hundred and forty-eight vessels of war, of which there appear to be, according to the same authority, forty-six in the different harbours of Great Britain, thirty-three in the Mediterranean, thirteen on the coast of Africa,\* twenty-seven in the West Indies, and the remainder in various other destinations.

We find, in the *American Almanack* for 1835, the United States navy given as twenty-one ships of war, of the following descriptions:—One line-of-battle ship, three frigates, ten sloops, seven schooners.†

It appears, then, that our royal navy contains, as nearly as possible, seven times as many ships as are to be found in the Government service of America.

Now, whatever objections may be urged with respect to

\* Upon what principle of justice are the people of these realms subjected to the whole expense of attempting to put down the slave trade? We say attempting, because it is well known that the traffic is carried on as actively as ever; and, during the last year, the number of negroes conveyed away from the shores of Africa has been estimated at twenty thousand. Here is a horrid trade, which will entail a dismal reckoning, at the hands of Providence, upon the future generations of those countries that encourage it! But by what right, by what credentials from on high, does England lay claim to the expensive and vain office of keeping all mankind within the pale of honesty?

† These statements refer to the ships in commission. Our navy comprises about six hundred vessels of all sizes and in all conditions. The whole American naval force consists of seventy ships. Yet Sir James Graham, when bringing forward our navy estimates for 1833, actually made use of this comparison to justify our force. So much for the *usefulness* of that which is called dexterity in debate!

other branches of expenditure, against a comparison of our burdens with the corresponding economy on the other side of the Atlantic, we think no reasonable mind will deny that it is by reference to the commerce of a people alone that we can form a correct judgment of their policy, so far as the marine service is concerned, and judge of their ability to support permanently their naval establishments.

The disadvantageous nature of our position, in comparison with that of America, will be better understood, if we repeat in two words, as the substance of what we have proved from the foregoing figures, that, whilst the population, exports, tonnage, and mercantile seamen of Great Britain are not double those of the United States, our royal navy is about six times as great as the corresponding Government force of that country.

But, if we proceed to a comparison of the land forces, we shall find them to exhibit a yet more striking disproportion in the burdens of the two nations.

The entire military service of America comprises rather less than 7,000 men. In 1833, the Parliament of Great Britain voted 90,000 soldiers for the army of this country. Here, then, we perceive the odds are—still bearing in mind the population, &c., of the two countries—as nearly as possible six to one against us.

If we had the space, however, to allow of our entering into a comparison of details, we should find that the proportion of our officers greatly exceeds the above ratio. It will suffice to prove this, when we add, that the number of our commissioned officers alone, at this time, exceeds the entire amount of the army of the United States; and of these we see, by the Army List for 1835, that 2,087 are field-officers of and above the rank of major!

To render the comparison of the respective burdens of the two people more simple and complete, we shall add their expenditure under these heads.



In the budget of 1833, the army and navy estimates of Great Britain were as follows:—

Army	.	.	.	.	.	£7,006,496
Navy	.	.	.	.	.	4,505,000
Ordnance	.	.	.	.	.	1,634,817

making a total of £13,146,313 for these warlike purposes.

In 1832, according to the *American Almanack* for 1835, the military service of the United States, including fortifications, arsenals, armouries, ordnance, internal improvements, &c., cost £1,134,589, whilst the navy estimate was for £817,100, making a total of £1,951,689.

Thus, it appears, that our gross expenditure, under the United States heads, is in the ratio of six and a-half to one, as compared with that of America—a country, be it repeated, whose population, trade, and registered tonnage are more than the half of our own—a country, too, whose public debt is cancelled, whilst ours amounts to nearly eight hundred millions!

But it will be said that our local position making it necessary to guard our shores with this demonstration of power, and our colonies calling for a vigilant protection, render unfair a comparison of this kingdom with the United States. We believe it might be shown that the dependencies of Great Britain are, at this moment, and in future are destined still more to be, the source of a considerable amount of taxation and pecuniary loss to the mother country; and we trust that some abler pen will be applied to the elucidation of this important question.

With respect to our proximity to the Continent, we recommend the experiment to be tried, whether that need necessarily embroil us in continental politics. Let us imagine that all our ambassadors and consuls were instructed to take no further share in the domestic concerns of European nations, but, throwing overboard the question of the balance of power—as we have long done that equally absurd bugbear of our ancestors, the balance of trade—to leave all those people to

their own quarrels, and to devote their attention, exclusively, after the example of the Americans, to the *commercial interests* of their country. This might prevent our diplomatists displaying their address in finessing with Metternich or Pozzo di Borgo ; it might save the bones of our couriers, who now scour the continent of Europe, carrying despatches and protocols ; and it might enable us to dispense with the services of one half of the establishment at the Foreign Office. But will any one who understands the subject pretend to tell us that our trade would suffer by such a change ?

Or if we imagine that our army and navy were reduced one-half, in consequence of this improvement of our policy, does any person seriously apprehend that these islands would be in danger of being molested by any European power ? If such there be, let him recollect that the British Empire contains a population of twenty-five millions of free people, compressed within a space of little more than three hundred miles square—probably a denser crowd of human beings than was ever found upon a similar area ; and, further, let it be borne in mind, that railroads are now in progress for connecting one extremity of England with the other, in such a way, that not only any required force of men, but the entire munitions of war, may be transported, in twelve hours, from Lancashire or Yorkshire to the coast of Sussex or Kent—thus converting, as it were, the entire island into a fortified position of such wonderful strength that the genius of Vauban or Marlborough could not have conceived anything so formidable. Which is the power of the Continent that will make a descent upon a people placed in such an attitude ?

But supposing even that such a scheme should be contemplated, it will be owned, we suppose, that some preparation for so mighty a conquest would be necessary, which must afford us the necessary time for preparations of defence. No one will contend that a fleet and an army of sufficient magnitude to pounce upon England for its prey, could be conjured

up on the scene, like the creations of harlequin's wand, without the spectators knowing, or caring to know, that the machinery for so grand a performance had been long in contrivance.

Besides, is it not apparent that henceforth the pressure of their own domestic affairs will engross the resources, and will impair the external power of all the Governments of Europe? *Reform Bills* will be demanded by their people, but they will not be obtained without bloodshed; and all must foresee that the struggle between the antagonist principles of feudalism and constitutionalism is inevitable throughout the whole of the Continent.

But to recur to the subject of America. It might be said that the primary cause of all the prosperity and happiness of its people is to be found in the wisdom of that advice which we have prefixed for the motto of this pamphlet. Happily for that nation, this precept has been religiously obeyed; for never have the political concerns of other States been suffered for one hour to divert the United States' Legislature from the pursuit of the just interests of its own people. The results may be seen, not only in unparalleled advances in wealth and civilisation at home, but in the fact we have just demonstrated, and which, we doubt not, will surprise most of our readers, that even the foreign commerce of this people is, in proportion to population, as great, or greater, than our own, notwithstanding our battles by land and by sea, and notwithstanding those expensive fruits of our victories, the colonies, that east, west, north, and south own our dominion!

It is a question of very considerable interest to us, whether America will continue her career as a manufacturing country, after the protective duties, which have professedly created her present cotton and other interests, shall have, in pursuance of the recent tariff law, been partially repealed.

It is the opinion of some writers, whose works are entitled to deference, that the United States cannot for centuries become our rivals in manufactures. They argue that, with an

unlimited extent of unsettled territory to tempt the inhabitants to engage in the natural labour of agriculture, they will not be induced, unless for much higher wages than in England, to follow the more confined and irksome pursuits of the factory or workshop.

But does not the present industry of the population of the New England States tend to prove that there is a disposition, in the people of the older portions of this country, to settle down into the pursuits incident to towns at an advanced stage of society, and leave to agriculture the natives of the newer States? We shall find that the exports from Boston comprise—among other articles of domestic manufacture equally unconnected with the system of factory labour—annually, about 3,500,000 pairs of boots and shoes, 600,000 bundles of paper, together with a large quantity of cordage, nails, furniture, &c.

We are inclined, however, to view the natives of the maritime portion of the Union, but particularly the inhabitants of the New England States, as eminently commercial in their tastes and characteristics; and, as such—looking to the amount of capital at present embarked in their cotton manufacture, as well as to the circumstances of the raw material being the produce of their own soil, and bearing in mind the prodigious increase that is taking place in the numbers of their people—we profess to see no prospect of this our own staple industry being abandoned; and, if not given up, we may expect, from the well-known and well-deserved panegyric paid by Burke to the enterprise of the New Englanders, in prosecuting the whale-fishing, that the competition on the part of such a people will be maintained with energy.

The capital employed in the various branches of the cotton manufacture in the United States is, according to a calculation for 1832, in "*Reuss's Statistics of America*," in amount about £11,000,000; and the consumption of raw cotton is estimated at 173,800 bales, or about one-fifth of all the growth of the

country, and, as nearly as possible, a fifth of the quantity worked up, during the same year, in Great Britain.

The greater portion of all the products of this labour is consumed at home: the rest is exported in the shape principally of heavy calicoes, that have sustained a competition with our own fabrics in the Mediterranean and the East.

Some occasional shipments of low yarns have been made to this country; but these transactions have not been of considerable magnitude.

Bearing in mind that the supply of the raw material of nearly one-half of our exports is derived from a country that threatens to eclipse us by its rival greatness, we cannot, whilst viewing the relative positions of England and the United States at this moment, refrain from recurring to the somewhat parallel cases of Holland and Great Britain, before the latter became a manufacturing State, when the Dutchman purchased the wool of this country, and sold it to us again in the form of cloth. Like as the latter nation became at a subsequent period, we are now overwhelmed with debts, contracted in wars, or the acquisition of colonies; whilst America, free from all burdens, as we were at the former epoch, is prepared to take up, with far greater advantages, the fabrication of their own cotton as we did of our wool. The Americans possess a quicker mechanical genius than even ourselves (such, again, was the case with our ancestors, in comparison with the Dutch), as witness their patents, and the improvements for which we are indebted to individuals of that country in mechanics—such as spinning, engraving, &c. We gave additional speed to our ships, by improving upon the naval architecture of the Dutch; and the similitude again applies to the superiority which, in comparison with the British models, the Americans have, for all the purposes of activity and economy, imparted to their vessels.

Such are some of the analogous features that warrant the comparison we have instituted; but there are other circum-

stances of a totally novel character, affecting in opposite degrees the destinies of these two great existing commercial communities, which must not be lost sight of.

The internal improvement of a country is, undoubtedly, the first and most important element of its growth in commerce and civilisation. Hence our canals have been regarded by Dupin as the primary material agents of the wealth of Great Britain. But a new invention—the railway—has appeared in the annals of locomotion, which bids fair to supersede all other known modes of land transit; and, by seizing at once, with all the energy of a young and unprejudiced people, this greatest discovery of the age, and planting, as it were, its fruits first throughout the surface of their territory, the Americans have made an important stride in the career of improvement, in advance of every nation of Europe.

The railroads of America present a spectacle of commercial enterprise, as well as of physical and moral triumph, more truly astonishing, we consider, than was ever achieved in the same period of time in any other country. Only in 1829 was the experiment first made, between Liverpool and Manchester, of applying steam to the navigation of land, so to speak, by means of iron railways, for the conveyance of passengers and merchandise: and now, in 1835, being less than seven years after the trial was first made and proved successful, the United States of America contain upwards of seventeen hundred miles of railroads in progress of construction, and of which no less than one thousand miles are complete and in actual use.\*

\* “The railroads, which were partly finished, partly in progress, at the time when I visited the United States, were as follow:—

	MILES.
Baltimore and Ohio (from Baltimore and Pittsburgh)	250
Massachusetts (from Boston to Albany)	200
Catskill to Ithaca (State of New York)	167
Charleston to Hamburg (South Carolina)	135
Boston and Brattleboro' (Massachusetts and Vermont)	114
Albany and New York	160

The enthusiasm with which this innovation upon the ancient and slower method of travelling was hailed in America—by instituting a newspaper expressly for its advocacy, and by the readiness of support which every new project of the kind encountered—evinced how well this shrewd people discovered at a glance the vast advantages that must accrue to whichever nation first effected so great a saving in that most precious ingredient of all useful commodities, time, as would be gained by the application of a discovery which trebled the speed, at

	MILES.
Columbia and Philadelphia (from Philadelphia to New York)	96
Lexington and Ohio (from Lexington to Cincinnati)	75
Camden and Amboy (New Jersey)	60
Baltimore and Susquehanna (Maryland)	48
Boston and Providence (Massachusetts and Rhode Island)	43
Trenton and Philadelphia	30
Providence and Stonington	70
Baltimore and Washington	38
Holliday's Burgh and Johnstown (Pennsylvania)	37
Ithaca and Oswego (New York)	28
Hudson and Berkshire (New York and Massachusetts)	25
Boston and Lowell (Massachusetts)	24
Senectady and Saratoga (New York)	21½
Mohawk and Hudson (New York)	15
Lackawaxen (from Honesdale to Carbondale, Pennsylvania)	17
Frenchtown to Newcastle (Delaware and Maryland)	16
Philadelphia and Norristown (Pennsylvania)	15
Richmond and Chesterfield (Virginia)	12
Manch Chunk (Pennsylvania)	9
Haarlem (from New York to Haarlem)	8
Quincey (from Boston to Quincey)	6
New Orleans (from Lake Pontchartrain to Orleans)	5¼

The extent of the railroads forms an aggregate of one thousand seven hundred and fifty miles. Ten years hence this amount of miles will probably be doubled or trebled; so that scarcely any other roads will be used than those on which steam-carriages may travel."—*Arfwedson's Travels in 1834*. [Note to the Sixth Edition of "England, Ireland, and America."]

[It may be stated on the authority of Mr. Robert H. Berdell, President of the Erie Railway Company, that thirty-five thousand miles of railway are now in operation in the United States, and that nearly three thousand millions of dollars are invested in these gigantic enterprises.]

the same time reducing the money-cost, of the entire intercourse of the community.

Already are all the most populous districts in the United States intersected by lines of railroads; whilst, amongst the number of unfinished, but fast advancing undertakings, is a work, now half completed, for connecting Baltimore on the Chesapeake with the Ohio river at Wheeling, a distance of more than two hundred and fifty miles.

Not content, however, with all that has been done, or is still doing, a scheme is at present favourably agitated in the public press of that country, that shall connect Washington city with New Orleans, by a series of railways, which, with those already in progress between New York and Washington, will join the Atlantic at the mouth of the Hudson and the Mexican Gulf; a project which, if completed, will enable a traveller to visit New York from New Orleans in four days—a transition of scene that may be better appreciated when it is remembered that a person might pass in winter from the frozen banks of the Hudson into the midst of the orange and sugar regions of the Mississippi in about ninety hours! Other plans, of even a more gigantic character, are marked out as in contemplation, upon the latest map published of the United States\*—plans that nothing but the prodigies already achieved by this people prevent us from regarding as chimerical.

It demands not a moment's reflection to perceive the immense advantages that must ensue from these improvements to a country which, like America, contains within itself, though scattered over so wide a surface, all the elements of agricultural and manufacturing greatness. By subjecting this vast territory to the dominion of steam, such an approximation of the whole is attained, that the coals and iron of Pennsylvania, the lead of Missouri, the cotton of Georgia, the sugar of Louisiana, and the havens of New York and New England, will all be brought into available connection with each other; in fact, by the

\* By Amos Lay.



almost miraculous power of this agent, the entire American continent will, for all the purposes of commercial or social intercourse, be compressed into an area not larger than that of England, supposing the latter to possess only her canals.

Nothing more strongly illustrates the disadvantages under which an old country, like Great Britain, labours in competing with her younger rival, than to glance at the contrast in the progress of railroads in the two empires.

At the same time that, in the United States, almost every day beheld a new railway company incorporated, by some one of the State's legislatures, at the cost only of a few dollars, and nearly by acclamation, the British Parliament intercepted by its votes some of the most important projects that followed in the train of the Liverpool railroad.

The London and Birmingham company, after spending upwards of forty thousand pounds, in attempting to obtain for its undertaking the sanction of the Legislature, was unsuccessful in the House of Lords. The following characteristic questions are extracted from the evidence taken before the committee :—

“ Do you know the name of Lady Hastings' place?—How near to it does your line go?—Taking the look-out of the principal rooms of the house, does it run in front of the principal rooms?—How far from the house is the point where it becomes visible?—That would be about a quarter of a mile?—Could the engines be heard in the house at that distance?—Is there any cutting or embankment there?—Is it in sight of the house?—Looking to the country, is it not possible that the line could be taken at a greater distance from the residence of Lady Hastings? \* \* \* \* \*

“ Was that to pass through Lords Derby and Sefton's land?—Yes, they both consented. They threw us back the first year, and we lost such a line as we could never get again. Since which they have consented to the other line going

through their property. \* \* \* Supposing that line as easy for you as the present, was there any objection arising from going through anybody's park?"

The following question, put on the same occasion, by a peer to a shopkeeper, is one that probably would not have been asked by any other person but a hereditary legislator:—

"Can it be of any great importance whether the article goes there in five or six hours, or in an hour and a half?"

The Brighton and several other railways were abandoned, through dread of the expensive opposition that was threatened in Parliament; amongst which the Great Western line was successfully opposed by the landowners, seconded by the heads of Eton College, under the plea that it would tend to impair the character of the scholars! And a large party, headed by the Marquis of Chandos, actually met in public to celebrate, with drinking and rejoicing, the frustration of this grand improvement. Yet this nobleman has since had the offer of a voice in the cabinet council of the King: and, but that he is as honest as he most assuredly is unenlightened and prejudiced, he might now be one of the ministers of this commercial country!

But to recur to the consideration of affairs on the other side of the Atlantic. There is another peculiarity in the present attitude of the American people, as compared with our own, that is probably more calculated than all others to accelerate their progress towards a superior rank of civilisation and power. We allude to the universality of education in that country. One thirty-sixth portion of all public lands, of which there are hundreds of thousands of square miles unappropriated, is laid apart for the purposes of instruction. If knowledge be power, and if education give knowledge, then must the Americans inevitably become the most powerful people in the world.

Some writers have attempted to detract from this proud feature in the policy of the United States, by adducing, as

examples, the backwoodsman and his family, and holding up their uncultivated minds, as well as their privation of Christian instruction, as proofs of the religious and moral abandonment of American society; forgetting that these frontier sections of the community are thinly spread over an inhospitable wilderness, where it must be acknowledged that no State provision for mental improvement could possibly embrace all their scattered members. When a man is placed at the distance of perhaps ten miles from his next neighbour, he is driven, as Dr. Johnson observes, to become his own carpenter, tailor, smith, and bricklayer; and it is from no fault in the laws, but owing to the like unavoidable nature of things, that the same solitary individual must also be left to act the part of teacher and pastor.

But, by referring to the last message of the Government of New York to the legislature of that State, which happens to be before us, we are able to exhibit to our readers, by a very brief quotation, the state of education in that most populous division of the Union.

“In the whole range of your duties,” says this most enlightened address, “there is no subject in which the interests of the people are more deeply involved, or which calls for higher efforts of legislative wisdom, than the cause of education. The funds already provided by the State for the support of common schools is large, but not so ample as the exceedingly great importance of the object demands.” After some other details, it goes on to say—“Eight hundred and thirty-five towns and wards (the whole number in the State) have made reports for the year 1833. There are nine thousand eight hundred and sixty-five school districts; the whole number of children, between the ages of five and sixteen years, in the State, was five hundred and thirty-four thousand and two; and the number instructed in the common schools in 1833 was five hundred and thirty-one thousand two hundred and forty. \* \* \* The whole amount expended during the year 1833, on the common

schools, cannot fall short of one million two hundred thousand dollars."\*

Bearing in mind that this refers only to one State of the Union, containing rather less than two millions of inhabitants, could we imagine a more striking contrast to the above statement than in the fact that, during the corresponding session of the British Parliament, a sum of £20,000 was voted towards educating the people of England, whilst, in close juxtaposition to this, was a grant of £60,000 for the purpose of *partly* furnishing Buckingham Palace!†

The very genius of American legislation is opposed to ignorance in the people, as the most deadly enemy of good government. Not only are direct measures, such as we have just quoted in the case of New York, taken to instruct the poor throughout the United States—not only are all newspapers and advertisements untaxed—but care is used, by excepting from fiscal burdens the humblest ingredients of the *materiel* of printing—such as paper, rags, type, &c.—to render knowledge as cheap and accessible as possible.

The newspaper press forms a distinguishing and rapidly improving feature in the economy of the United States. In

\* [Mr. Bright, in the speech which he delivered at Birmingham on the 13th December, 1865, said:—"I have just seen a report of a speech delivered last night by Mr. Watkin, who has recently returned from the United States. Speaking of education, he says that, taking the nine Northern States to contain ten millions and a half of people, he found there were 40,000 schools, and an average attendance of 2,133,000 children, the total cost of their education being 9,000,000 dols. In the four Western States, with a population of 6,100,000, there are 37,000 schools, with an average attendance of nearly one million and a half scholars, at a cost of 1,250,000 dols. Thus, in a population of sixteen millions, there are 77,000 schools, to which every poor child can go, at a cost of £2,000,000 a year. He thought this highly to the credit of our American cousins, and I perfectly agree with him on that point."]

† [This was written before the date of the education movement, in which Mr. Cobden from an early period took a conspicuous part. According to the last Report of the Committee of Council on Education, the sum of £8,087,296 1s. 11d. has been expended in Parliamentary grants from 1839 to 31st December, 1864. "The expenditure from Education grants," in the latter year, amounted to £655,041 11s. 5d.]

1834, according to the *American Almanack* for 1835, the aggregate of newspapers published under different titles in America was 1,265, of which ninety were daily journals; and the entire number of copies circulated during the year is estimated at ninety millions.\*

In the British Islands three hundred and sixty-nine newspapers are published, of which seventeen only issue daily.† The annual sale of these is estimated at about thirty millions.

If, therefore, we compare the newspaper press of America and England together, allowing for the disproportion of inhabitants in the two countries, we shall be compelled to acknowledge that there is more than six times as much advertising and reading on the other side of the Atlantic as in Great Britain.

There are those who are fond of decrying newspaper reading. But we regard every scheme that is calculated to make mankind *think*—everything that, by detaching the mind from the present moment, and leading it to reflect on the past or future, rescues it from the dominion of mere sense—as calculated to exalt us in the scale of being; and whether it be a newspaper or a volume that serves this end, the instrument is worthy of honour at the hands of enlightened philanthropists.

We know of nothing that would tend more to inform the people of England, and especially of Ireland, than removing the excise fetters from our press. Independently of the facilities to commerce, and the benefits which must ensue to temperance and morals generally, a free press would, by co-operating with a good government (and henceforth it is our

\* [The census of 1860 states that 4,051 newspapers and periodicals were then published in the United States, of which 3,242 were political, the remainder being devoted to religion and literature. The annual aggregate circulation of copies was estimated at 927,951,548.]

† [From "Mitchell's Newspaper Directory" for 1865 it appears that 1,271 journals are now published in the United Kingdom, exclusive of 554 Reviews and Magazines. There are no trustworthy statistics of the circulation of these publications.]

own fault if we have a bad one), assist essentially the efforts of those who desire to reduce the expenditure of the State, and help us to dispense with that costly voucher of our ignorance, the standing army of this country.

We have thus hastily glanced at a few of the points of comparison to be found in the prospects of Great Britain and America at this moment. To what shall we liken the relative situations of these two great commercial and naval rivals? We will venture on a simile.

Such of our readers as remember the London tradesman of thirty years ago, will be able to call to mind the powdered wig and queue, the precise shoes and buckles, and the unwrinkled silk hose and tight inexpressibles, that characterised the shopkeeper of the old school. Whenever this stately personage walked abroad on matters of trade, however pressing or important, he never forgot for a moment the dignified step of his forefathers; whilst nothing gratified his self-complacency more than to take his gold-headed cane in hand, and leaving his own shop all the while, to visit his poorer neighbours, and to show his authority by inquiring into their affairs, settling their disputes, and compelling them to be honest, and to manage their establishments according to his plan. His business was conducted throughout upon the formal mode of his ancestors. His clerks, shopmen, and porters all had their appointed costumes; and their intercourse with their chief, or with each other, was disciplined according to established laws of etiquette. Every one had his especial department of duty, and the line of demarcation at the counter was marked out and observed with all the punctilio of neighbouring but rival States. The shop of this trader of the old school retained all the peculiarities and inconveniences of former generations; its windows displayed no gaudy wares to lure the vulgar passer-by, and the panes of glass, inserted in ponderous wooden frames, were exactly constructed after the ancestral pattern. Such were some of the solemn peculiarities of the last generation of tradesmen.

The present age produced a new school of traders, whose first innovation was to cast off the wig, and cashier the barber with his pomatum-box, by which step an hour was gained in the daily toilet. Their next change was to discard the shoes and the tight unmentionables—whose complicated details of buckles and straps, and whose close adjustment occupied another half-hour—in favour of Wellingtons and pantaloons, which were whipped on in a trice, and gave freedom, though perhaps at the expense of dignity, to the personal movements during the day. Thus accoutred, these supple dealers whisked or flew, just as the momentary calls of business became more or less urgent; whilst so absorbed were they in their own interests, that they scarcely knew the names of their nearest neighbours, nor cared whether they lived peaceably or not, so long as they did not come to break their windows.

Nor did the spirit of innovation end here; for the shops of this new race of dealers underwent as great a metamorphosis as their owners. Whilst the internal economy of these was reformed with a view to give the utmost facility to the labour of the establishment, by dispensing with all forms, and tacitly agreeing even to suspend the ordinary deferences due to station, lest their observance might, however slightly, impede the business in hand—externally the windows, which were constructed of plate glass, with elegant frames extending from the ground to the ceiling, were made to blaze with all the tempting finery of the day.

We all know the result that followed from this very unequal rivalry. One by one the ancient and quiet followers of the habits of their ancestors yielded before the active competition of their more alert neighbours. Some few of the less bigoted disciples of the old school adopted the new-light system, but all who tried to stem the stream were overwhelmed; for with grief we add, that the very last of these very interesting specimens of olden time that survived, joining the two generations of London tradesmen, and whose shop used to gladden the soul of every

Tory pedestrian in Fleet Street, with its unreformed windows, has at length disappeared, having lately passed into the Gazette, that Schedule A of anti-reforming traders.

That which the shopkeeper of the present day is to him of the last age, such, comparing great things with small, is the commercial position of America as contrasted with that of Great Britain at the present moment. Our debt may be called the inexpressibles or tights, which incessantly restrain us from keeping up with the nimble pace of our pantalooned rivals. The square-toed shoes\* and the polished buckles may be compared to the feudal laws and customs which, in competition with Wellington-booted brother Jonathan, impede the march of improvement and the enterprise of Englishmen. The powdered wig and queue we shall liken to our Church Establishment, which, although very ornamental and imposing in appearance, does yet engross a great share of the time and attention of our Parliament to adjust it properly,† all of which the legislature of our straight-haired competitor has been enabled to apply to the encouragement of a more prosperous trade. The untaxed newspapers of America, with their wide expanses of advertisements, contrasted‡ with the stamped sheets of this country, are the new and old-light windows of the two generations of shop-

\* There is scarcely a large town in England whose prosperity and improvement are not vitally affected by the operation of our laws of entail. In the vicinity of Manchester scarcely any freehold land can be bought; Birmingham is almost wholly built upon leasehold land; Wolverhampton has long been presenting a dilapidated aspect, in the best part of the town, in consequence of the property required for improvement being in the hands of the Church, and consequently inalienable. In many parts, manufactures are, from the like obstructing causes, prevented extending themselves over our coal-beds. The neighbourhood of Bullock Smithy might be instanced, for example.

† It would form an instructive summary to collect from our parliamentary history, for the last three hundred years, details of the time spent in the vain endeavour to make conscience square with Acts of Parliament.—See the debates in both Houses on Ireland in 1832 and 1833, for examples.

‡ It is not uncommon to find two thousand advertisements, principally of merchandise, contained in a single copy of a New York journal. We have counted no less than one hundred and seventy announcements in one column



keepers. The quickened gait of the trader of to-day, and the formal step of his predecessor, are the railways of the United States in competition with our turnpikes and canals. And to complete the simile, if we would see in the conduct of the two nations a resemblance to the contrast between the policy of the dealer of the old school, who delighted to meddle in the concerns of his neighbours, and that of the reformed tradesman, who rigidly confined his attention to the duties of his own counter—let us picture England, interfering with and managing the business of almost every State in Europe, Asia, and Africa, whilst America will form no connection with any one of them, excepting as customers.

What! shall we consign Old England, then, to ruin? Heaven forbid! Her people are made of tough materials, and he would be but a dastardly politician that despaired of them even yet. We say not, then, that this country will, like the antique establishment of the individual trader, perish at the feet of its more youthful and active competitor; but we fervently believe that our only chance of national prosperity lies in the timely remodelling of our system, so as to put it as nearly as possible upon an equality with the improved management of the Americans.

But let us not be misconstrued. We do not advocate republican institutions for this country. We believe the government of the United States to be at this moment the best in the world; but then the Americans are the best\* people; and we

or compartment of the *New York Gazette*. Of course the crowded aspect of one of these sheets, in comparison with a London newspaper, is as different as is one of the latter in contrast with a Salisbury or any other provincial journal.

\* We mean individually and nationally. As individuals, because, in our opinion, the people that are the best educated must, morally and religiously speaking, be the best. As a nation, because it is the only great community that has never waged war excepting in absolute self-defence—the only one which has never made a conquest of territory by force of arms (contrast the conduct of this government to the native Indians on the Mississippi, with our treatment of the aborigines on the Swan River); because it is the only nation

have a theory that the government of every State is always, excepting periods of actual change, that which is the best adapted to the circumstances and wants of its inhabitants.

But they who argue in favour of a republic, in lieu of a mixed monarchy, for Great Britain, are, we suspect, ignorant of the genius of their countrymen. Democracy forms no element in the materials of English character. An Englishman is, from his mother's womb, an aristocrat. Whatever rank or birth, whatever fortune, trade, or profession may be his fate, he is, or wishes or hopes to be, an aristocrat. The insatiable love of caste that in England, as in Hindostan, devours all hearts, is confined to no walks of society, but pervades every degree, from the highest to the lowest.\* Of what conceivable use, then, would it be to strike down the lofty patri- cians that have descended to us from the days of the Normans and Plantagenets, if we of the middle class—who are more enslaved than any other to this passion—are prepared to lift up, from amongst ourselves, an aristocracy of mere wealth—not less austere, not less selfish—only less noble than that we had deposed. No! whatever changes in the course of time educa- tion may and will effect, we do not believe that England, at this moment, contains even the germs of genuine republi- canism.

We do not, then, advocate the adoption of democratic institutions for such a people. But the examples held forth to

whose government has never had occasion to employ the army to defend it against the people; the only one which has never had one of its citizens con- victed of treason; and because it is the only country that has honourably dis- charged its public debt.

The slavery deformity was forcibly impressed upon this people in its infancy by the mother country. May the present generation outgrow the blemish.

\* A diverting specimen of aristocracy in low life is to be found in an amusing little volume, called, "Mornings at Bow Street." A chimney-sweep, who had married the daughter of a costermonger, against the latter's consent, applied to the magistrate for a warrant to recover the person of his wife, who had been taken away from him by her father. The father did not object to the character of the husband, but protested against the connection as being "*so low*."

us by the Americans, of strict economy, of peaceful non-interference, of universal education, and of other public improvements, may, and, indeed, must be emulated by the Government of this country, if the people are to be allowed even the chance of surviving a competition with that republican community. If it be objected, that an economical government is inconsistent with the maintenance of the monarchical and aristocratic institutions of this land, then we answer, let an unflinching economy and retrenchment be enforced—*ruat cœlum* !

Of the many lessons of unsophisticated and practical wisdom which have—as if in imitation of that arrangement of perpetual decay and reproduction that characterises all things in material nature—been sent back from the New World to instruct the Old, there are none so calculated to benefit us—because there are none so much needed—as those maxims of providence and frugality to which Franklin first gave birth, and which, gaining authority and strength from the successive advocacy and practice of Washington, Jefferson, and now of Jackson, have at length become identified with the spirit of the laws and institutions of the United States.

An attempt has been made latterly by that class of our writers \* denominated Conservative, to deride this parsimony of the Franklin school as unworthy of the American character. But we are, at this present moment, writhing beneath the chastisement due to our violations of the homely proverbs of “Poor Richard ;” and it is only by returning within the sober limits of our means, and rigidly husbanding our time and resources, and by renouncing all idle pomp and luxury—it is by these methods only, and not by advocating still further outrages of the laws of prudence, that this nation can be rescued from the all but irretrievable embarrassment into which its own extravagance and folly have precipitated it.

The first, and, indeed, only certain step towards a diminution of our government expenditure, must be the adoption of

\* Basil Hall’s spending class.

that line of foreign policy which the Americans have clung to, with such wisdom and pertinacity, ever since they became a people.

If ever there was a territory that was marked out by the finger of God for the possession of a distinct nation, that country is ours; whose boundary is the ocean, and within whose ramparts are to be found, in abundance, all the mineral and vegetable treasures requisite to make us a great commercial people. Discontented with these blessings, and disdaining the natural limits of our empire, in the insolence of our might, and without waiting for the assaults of envious enemies, we have sallied forth in search of conquest or rapine, and carried bloodshed into every quarter of the globe. The result proves, as it ever must, that we cannot violate the moral law with impunity. Great Britain is conscious that she is now suffering the slow but severe punishment inflicted at her own hands—she is crushed beneath a debt so enormous that nothing but her own mighty strength could have raised the burden that is oppressing her.

Again we say (and let us be excused the repetition of this advice, for we write with no other object but to enforce it), England cannot survive its financial embarrassment, except by renouncing that policy of intervention with the affairs of other States which has been the fruitful source of nearly all our wars.

We trust that this opinion will be generated throughout the population of this country, and that the same spirit will be reflected, through its representatives in Parliament, upon the Government.

In future, it will not be sufficient that no question concerning the State policy of other nations is allowed to occupy the attention of our legislature, unless it be first shown that our own honour or our interests are involved in its consideration—it will not be enough that our fleets and armies are not permitted to take a part in the contentions of other nations; all this will

not avail unless our diplomatists and foreign secretaries are jealously restrained from taking a share, either by treaties or protocols, according to the invariable wont of their predecessors, in the ever-varying squabbles of our continental neighbours. By this course of policy, and by this alone, we shall be enabled to reduce our army and navy more nearly to a level with the corresponding burdens of our American rivals.

May we be allowed, once more, to refute the objection which will be urged, that our numerous fleets are necessary to the defence of our commerce? Then, we ask, does any one deny that the persons of American merchants, or their vessels, are as safe in every quarter of the world as our own? We have seen to how great a proportion of our tonnage the American mercantile navy now amounts; we have seen how vast an export trade they carry on; and we have seen with how small a Government force all this is protected; may not an unanswerable argument, then, be found here, in favour of dispensing, henceforth, with a portion of our enormous naval and military establishments?

Hitherto, whenever a war has at any time been threatened between two or more European States, however remote or however insignificant, it has furnished a sufficient pretence for our statesmen to augment our armaments by sea and by land, in order to assume an imposing attitude, as it is termed—forgetting, all the while, that by maintaining a strict neutrality in these continental brawls, and by diligently pursuing our peaceful industry, whilst our neighbours were exhausting themselves in senseless wars, we might be growing in riches, in proportion as they became poorer; and, since it is by wealth after all that the world is governed, we should, in reality, be the less in danger from the powers on the Continent, the more they indulged in hostilities with each other.

It is a common error with our statesmen to estimate the strength of a nation—as, for instance, is the case at this

moment, in their appreciation of the power of Russia, Prussia, or Austria—according to the magnitude of its armies and navies ; whereas these are the signs, and, indeed, the causes, of real poverty and weakness in a people.

“Our public debt is cancelled,” said Mr. Benton, a speaker at the dinner lately held at Washington to celebrate the extinction of the American debt—“our public debt is cancelled ; and there is more strength in those words than in one hundred ships of the line ready for battle, or in a hundred thousand armed soldiers.” And, to exemplify the truth of this sentiment, we have subsequently beheld this very people, with only a few schooners and frigates, and seven thousand troops, menacing the French Government, *steeped in debt*, at the head of its million of fighting men, and its three hundred vessels of war.

To remove, if possible, for ever the extravagant chimera that haunts the Government and the people of this country, of our being in danger from any possible combination of continental hostilities, let us suppose, for the sake of argument, that Russia were to invade Turkey—or that France were again to cross the Rhine, having first seized upon Holland and Belgium, and attack Prussia and Austria—or that the Spaniards should seize upon Portugal—or that the Austrian Government were to invade Naples or Sardinia—or, if such a supposition be possible, let us imagine these powers to be engaged in a battle-royal all together ; now, does any sober and reasoning mind believe that Great Britain, who, we will presume, had wisely availed herself of the opportunities afforded by her insular position to remain neuter, would be selected by any one of these powers, in addition to the enemies already opposed to it, for the object of gratuitous attack ? Does any rational person think that we should, under such circumstances, be in greater jeopardy than the Americans from these contentions ?

Having already demonstrated that even Napoleon, with Europe at his feet, was powerless in his attacks upon our

exports, we are afraid of being tedious in recurring to that subject.

Were a war once more to break forth over the Continent of Europe, and were we to stand aloof from the conflict, our commerce and manufactures, instead of receiving injury in any quarter, would be thereby benefited; for, besides the well-known facilities which a state of warfare would give to the smuggler for supplying those very belligerents themselves with the products of our labour, it would, at the same time, put an end to the competition which we now sustain, in other parts of the world, from our manufacturing rivals of Europe. Germany, France, Switzerland, and Belgium, and, indeed, almost every nation of the Continent, for whose independence and existence we fought so long and arduously, have profited by the peace, to exclude our fabrics from their markets, and, in mistaken policy, borrowed from our own restrictive code, to raise up, at great sacrifices of national wealth, a manufacturing industry for themselves.

Thus we find that, at this moment, Prussia is completing a wall of tariffs, which she has been sedulously constructing for many years, and which will, more effectually than did Napoleon, exclude us from the German market—Prussia, for whom we bled, and for whose subsidies we are still taxed! Austria, another of our costly allies, whose disasters our most renowned statesman\* would not outlive—Austria has, ever since the peace, sealed her territory against our merchandise. Naples—that unworthy *protégé*, in behalf of whose court England's greatest hero † sullied his otherwise untarnished fame—Naples repays us with an impost of cent. per cent. upon our manufactures; whilst France has, since Napoleon's fall, been a less profitable customer to England than she was during the time of his extremest enmity towards this country.

True, at the close of the war, our ministers might have

\* Pitt.

† Nelson, Lady Hamilton, Prince Caraccioli.

stipulated for, and might have commanded a trade with all Europe, as some indemnity for our expenditure; but the warriors and statesmen who represented us at Vienna, and who took pains to forward such measures as the military occupation of France, or the erection of fortresses in Belgium, or the binding us to become guarantee for the permanency of the union of the Netherlands, forgot to utter one word about our merchants. It was unbecoming the dignity of our gallant and noble plenipotentiaries to stipulate for the welfare of the artisans and manufacturers of Great Britain. Compare this with the results of the cheap diplomacy of the Americans.

Alas! by what numberless arts, neglects, and caprices (to say nothing of crimes) have the interests of this industrious and greatly-favoured people been victimised!

Before closing this pamphlet, we will offer a few remarks as to the course which it behoves Great Britain to pursue, for the future, upon an important question of commercial policy.

With a view to enlarge, as much as possible, the capabilities of this people to support the burden of debt and taxation with which they are destined to be permanently loaded, every possible facility must be given to the increase of population, by the expansion of our foreign trade, and which can only be accomplished by repealing the protective duties on corn.

We shall be here met with the cry, that we are desirous of converting England into one vast manufactory, that we advocate the interests of our order, and so forth. Far from nourishing any such *esprit de corps*, our predilections lean altogether in an opposite direction. We were born and bred up amidst the pastoral charms of the south of England, and we confess to so much attachment to the pursuits of our forefathers (always provided that it be separated from the rick-burnings and pauperism of modern agriculture), that, had we the casting of the rôle of all the actors on this world's stage, we do not think we should suffer a cotton-mill or a manufactory to have



a place in it; not that they remind us of "*billyrollers*," "*straps*," and "*infant martyrdoms*," for we never saw such; but we think a system which draws children from home, where they formerly worked in the company of parents, and under the wholesome restraint incident to disparity of years—nature's own moral safeguard of domestic life—to class them in factories, according to equality of age, to be productive of vice. But the factory system, which sprang from the discoveries in machinery, has been adopted in all the civilised nations of the world, and it is in vain for us to think of discountenancing its application to the necessities of this country; it only remains for us to mitigate, as far as possible, the evils that are, perhaps, not inseparably connected with this novel social element.

The present corn laws are founded on the principle of limiting, as far as possible, the growth of the population of Britain, within the means of the soil to supply it with subsistence. No candid advocate of a protective duty will deny that it must have this tendency; nor will he dispute that, to restrict the import of corn into a manufacturing nation, is to strike at the life of its foreign commerce.

It is objected by the landowners of England that, if the duty on grain were to be reduced, it would operate unfavourably upon their interests, and they claim a protection at the hands of the rest of society. Now, without entering at all into the question of the right which belongs to such pretensions, we shall content ourselves with taking our stand upon the simple ground of necessity, and declare that the people of this country are in an emergency that precludes the possibility of their ministering to the selfishness of any one class in the community.

The interest of the public debt cannot be paid except by the co-operation of our foreign commerce; and this cannot be preserved permanently, unless the price of that first element of the cost of our manufactures, *food*, be the same here as with our

competitors abroad. We are surprised that the question has not before been placed in this point of view by the advocates of a free trade in corn, since it withdraws the subject altogether from that invidious position which it has hitherto held betwixt the rival contentions of agriculture and commerce, and places it under the control of inexorable State necessity.

We have been amazed (if anything could astonish us from this unintelligent party) to find that the national debt is one of the leading arguments made use of by the economists of the Sadler school, in advocating a restrictive duty on corn. A brief appeal to a very few simple facts will, we believe, not only deprive them of this argument, but, in the opinion of all unprejudiced minds, place it on the opposite side of the question.

Our public debt, funded and unfunded, amounts to about eight hundred millions. Let this sum be more fully appreciated, by bearing in mind that it exceeds the aggregate of all the debts of the whole world, including that of the East India Company, amounting to one hundred and fifty millions. Here, then, we have the British Empire, with only its twenty-five millions of population—possessing a territory of only ninety thousand square geographical miles, and containing only forty-five millions of acres of cultivated land (about two-thirds of the area of France), supporting an annual burden for the interest of the national debt, equal to the taxation borne, for the same purpose, by all other States. How, then, can a country, of so confined a boundary, and with no greater population than we have named, find it possible to endure so great a disproportion of taxation? If it be asked, how does France meet her public expenses, we can answer, by pointing to the superabundant production of wine, oil, silk, tobacco, fruit, and corn, yielded throughout an expanse of territory so wide as to ensure an almost perpetual harvest to its people. If we inquire, how does Russia maintain her government burdens—the surplus timber, corn, hemp, and tallow of that country must be the reply. Would we know by what resources Italy, Spain,

and America discharge their respective national encumbrances—the excess of the produce of silk, oil, fruits, cotton, and tobacco, over and above the wants of the population of those countries, solves the mystery.

But we demand to know by what means Great Britain can sustain an annual burden, for interest of debt, exceeding that of these and all other States together. Is it out of the surplus production of its corn? Her soil has not, for the last forty years, yielded sufficient to supply the necessities of her population. Is this enormous demand satisfied by the yearly excess of her wines, silk, oil, fruits, cotton, or tobacco? The sterile land and inhospitable climate of Britain are incapable of producing any one of these. Where, then, lies the secret of her wealth? Is it in her colonies? How, if we are prepared to prove that these are at this moment, and, in future, are still more destined to become, a severe burden to the people of these realms?

*Our mineral riches are the means by which alone we have been enabled to incur this debt, and by whose agency only can we at this moment discharge the interest of it.*

To satisfy ourselves of this, let us examine the year's return of our revenue, and we shall there discover nearly twenty millions of income under the head of customs duties. How are the commodities, on which this amount of taxation is levied, obtained from foreigners? Are they received in exchange for our agricultural produce? By looking over the list of articles exported, we shall, on the contrary, find that out of thirty-six millions of home products not one million is the unmixed growth of the soil.

These commodities are purchased by our cottons, woollens,\* hardware, and the other articles produced by the manufacturers of this country; the growth, to use the term, of the coal and

\* We have the testimony of the Leeds manufacturers, in their evidence before the legislature, that foreign wools are absolutely indispensable to our Yorkshire industry.

iron of Great Britain—which are, we repeat, the primary sources of all her wealth and power, and the want of which alone prevents other nations of Europe from rivalling her in manufacturing greatness. Of course it is known that our agricultural labour supplies a great portion of the food of our weavers and other artizans, and, therefore, mixes with the results of their industry; but when it is recollected that the cost of food here is from fifty to one hundred and fifty per cent. dearer than in other States, it will be admitted that it is not owing to the cheap price at which the farmer supplies the corn of the manufacturer that the latter is enabled to undersell his foreign competitors.

To come to the point with those who advocate a restrictive policy on our foreign trade, by a protection, as it is called, of our agriculture, we ask, in what way do they propose ever to pay off the national debt, or permanently to discharge the interest of it, out of the indigenous wealth of these islands?

The whole area of cultivated land in this monarchy is, as we have before stated, estimated at about forty-five millions of acres: at twenty pounds per acre, the fee simple of the soil of these islands (we, of course, leave out the houses, &c.) would very little exceed the amount of our debt. There is an end, therefore, of the idea of discharging the principal out of the real property of the country; and by what means would they who obstruct a foreign commerce profess to pay the interest of the debt without the assistance of that trade? Supposing that our exports were diminished, and that, owing to the consequent falling off in our imports, our customs were sensibly reduced, from what articles of our agricultural produce would these advocates of a Japanese policy raise the deficient revenue? In France (where the prohibitive system, which has long reigned supremely, is drawing fast to a dismal end) the customs duties amount to about one-fifth of our own, and the great bulk of the revenue is levied from the land. But provided that a reduction

of our foreign trade rendered such a step necessary, we ask again and it is an important question, involving the whole gist of our argument), upon what branch of British agriculture could an augmented impost be levied? May not the recent almost fanatical outcry against the malt tax, the only burden of any magnitude borne directly by the land in this country, serve as a sufficient answer to the inquiry?

The question of the repeal of the corn laws, then, resolves itself into one of absolute state necessity; since our foreign trade, which is indispensable to the payment of the interest of the national debt, cannot be permanently preserved if we persevere in a restrictive duty against the principal article of exchange of rude, unmanufacturing people. To prohibit the import of corn, such as is actually the case at this moment, is to strangle infant commerce in its cradle; nay, worse, it is to destroy it even in its mother's womb.

We recommend the landowners, but especially the great proprietors who constitute the upper house of legislature, to reflect upon this view of the corn laws.

But we have remarked an inclination in a part of the landed interest to slight—to use the mildest possible term—the public creditor; a feeling that shone forth in the motion of the Marquis of Chandos to remove the malt tax—thus aiming at the insolvency of the Chancellor of the Exchequer—without caring first to inquire by what fresh imposts he should meet the engagements of his country. These unreflecting minds are, we apprehend, quite incapable of estimating the consequences that will ensue if ever we should be found unable to meet the interest of the debt—in other words, if the British nation should be declared bankrupt! Let us for one moment contemplate the results that would follow from such an event.

We find, from a statement in “Porter's Official Tables,” that there are 250,000 persons receiving dividends, of and under the amount of £200 a year. Presuming the families or dependents

of them to average \* two each, then we shall have here half a million of individuals looking to the public funds for support. Moreover, we find the total amount of the deposits in all the savings' banks of the kingdom to be £13,500,000; and the number of depositors, according to the same authority, is 412,217, averaging £33 each; taking the families or dependents of these at the same average as before, and it gives three-quarters of a million more. Then there is an immense amount of the public debt owing to charities,—including insurance offices, benefit clubs, schools, &c., involving the interests of an incalculable multitude of necessitous persons. Guessing these to amount to only the same total as the last mentioned (for it is impossible to form a correct estimate on the subject), then we arrive at an aggregate of two millions of the middle and lower classes, who are, directly or indirectly, claimants on the national debt.

Now, no one capable of thinking upon such a subject at all will for a moment believe that, if we were driven to such an extremity as to rob these two millions—comprising so many of the labourers, the small traders, the orphans and widows—of their subsistence, that the pomp of the court or the wealth of the clergy, or the privileges of our nobles, would be more secure than the bread of these humble annuitants.

No rational mind can suppose that lords in waiting, grooms of the stole, gold sticks and silver sticks, would be maintained—that bishops and prebends would still be found in undisturbed possession of their stalls and revenues—or that the peers would retain their law of primogeniture, or the right of hereditary legislation, whilst desolation and misery overspread the land with horrors as terrible as any it could undergo from the ravages of half-a-million of Cossacks.†

\* To avoid exaggeration, we have named a lower average than we are entitled to quote.

† Here let us remark, in reference to the absurdest of all absurd chimeras with which we haunt ourselves, of this empire being in danger from the assaults

The cleverest of our journalists has said—and the words have passed into a proverb—"Before you rob the public creditor, send your throne to the pawn-shop." And nothing can be more certain than that the national debt (which ought never to have been incurred, and the authors of which some future generation will probably deem to have been madmen) must be borne by the people of England, entire and untouched, so long as they can stand beneath its burden. If ever the day should come that sees this mighty fabric crush the nation to the dust, it will bury in its ruins the monarchy, Church, and aristocracy, with every vestige of our feudal institutions, and every ancestral precedent—leaving the state, like Mr. Courtenay's sheet of blank paper, upon which the then existing generation will have the task of inscribing a new constitution, borrowed from the freest and most flourishing community of that day, and which, in all probability, will be found on the continent of America.

From such a catastrophe there is no escape but in either honestly paying off the principal of the public debt, or in continuing to discharge the interest of it for ever. The ravings after an equitable adjustment, and other like expedients, are but the impracticable schemes of those who would wish to precipitate such a calamity as we have been describing.

If every house in England were converted into a Court of Chancery, and if all the men between twenty and sixty were constituted Lord Chancellors, there would not then be a sufficient quantity of equity courts and equity judges to effect such an equitable adjustment of the national debt as is meant, during the life-time of an entire generation.

The national debt, then, is inviolable; and this recalls us to the inquiry of how it is to be permanently supported; which brings us again to the question of the corn laws.

of Russia—that we are convinced there is, at this moment, ten thousand times more cause of apprehension from the financial evils of Great Britain than from all the powers of the world.

The only way in which we can lighten the pressure of the debt is by adding to the population and wealth of the country. The agricultural districts have, we suspect – so far as the middle classes are concerned—already experienced that dull state incident to the stationary period of society ; whilst, under the present amended poor laws, we believe that the farther increase of the pauper population will be effectually checked. The sole way, then, of adding to our numbers, is to give the freest possible development to the only present superabundant contents of the soil—the mineral products of Great Britain.

By repealing the present corn laws, and putting only a fixed duty of such an amount as would bring the greatest revenue (we object no more to a tax on corn than on tea or sugar, for the purpose of revenue,\* but we oppose a *protective* duty, as it is called), which, probably, might be found to be two shillings a quarter, such an impulse would be given to the manufactures of this country, whilst so great a shock would be experienced by our rivals, from the augmented price of food all over the world, that a rapid growth of wealth and increase of numbers must take place throughout the coal and iron districts of England, Wales, and Scotland.

The population of Staffordshire, Lancashire, Yorkshire, Lanarkshire, and of counties adjacent to these, might be trebled in the course of a couple of generations ; and there would be no limit to its increase but in the contents of our coal mines, to which geologists assign a duration varying from two to three thousand years !

It will be asked, what would be the effects of such a change upon the agriculture of the country ? The best way of replying to this question is to consider what must have been the consequence to all interests in this country if, in lieu of the restrictions put upon the import of corn in 1816, a law had been passed, imposing only such a moderate duty as would

\* [Mr. Cobden soon afterwards acknowledged his error. See Prentice's History of the League, vol. i., p. 194.]



ultimately produce the greatest revenue, and which, in our opinion, would be found to be two shillings a quarter. The factory system would in all probability not have taken place in America or Germany;—it most certainly could not have flourished, as it has done, both in those states, and in France, Belgium, and Switzerland, through the fostering bounties which the high-priced food of the British artisan has offered to the cheaper fed manufacturer of those countries.

Our belief, after some reflection upon this question, is (having already very far exceeded the intended limits of this pamphlet, we are precluded from going into details), that, had a wise modification of our corn laws been effected at the close of the war, the official value of our exports would have exceeded by one-third its present amount. This is, of course, presuming that our manufacturing population had augmented proportionately;—we believe that, under such circumstances, the before-mentioned counties would have now sustained upwards of a million more than their present numbers; but, as the increase of their inhabitants would not have been equal to the demand for labour, a great immigration must have taken place from the agricultural districts. This would have saved those quarters that frightful ordeal of pauperism and crime with which they have disgraced our modern history. The farmer would, by the offer of other resources for his family and dependents, have been saved from the state of servility into which he is plunged. Instead of the rent of the tenants being dictated by the landlords, the former would, under this more favourable state of things, have been the arbiters of the incomes of the latter. In short, the buyers—*i.e.*, the farmers—would, in this case, as the purchasers do in dealing with all other commodities, have decided the prices of their farms—they would not have been, as at present, determined by the sellers, *i.e.*, the landowners.

Under such an assumed state of things, this country would, we believe, by this time have acquired an increase to its present

wealth to the extent of 350\* millions—nearly one-half the amount of the national debt.

The immediate effects of all this to the landed proprietor would clearly have been a reduction of rent; or where the property was heavily encumbered, his estates would have passed into other hands.

We should not, in such a case, have heard of those displays of wanton extravagance that tend so much to demoralise all classes. Instead of the exhibitions of prodigality and insolence abroad, with which some of those proprietors affronted the nations of the continent, and disgraced at the same time their native country—instead of their contributing at home to raise and support a palace for Crockford—instead of their dispensing with all decorum, and herding with grooms and black-legs at Newmarket or Doncaster—instead of the necessary consequences of all this, the subsequent ruin and exile of such wastrels†—in place of these things, we might have beheld a provident and virtuous proprietary residing principally upon and managing their estates; and who, we verily believe, would, under this supposed state of things, have become richer in wealth, as well as honour, than they are at this day.

But selfishness, which is ever short-sighted, has hitherto governed supremely the destinies of this empire; and we have seen how disastrous has been its rule, not only to its own interests, but to the prosperity of the nation at large. Should the same misgovernment from no better motives be persevered in with respect to the corn question, the effects will be still more calamitous for the future. The public debt, “that eternal ally of truth and justice” (to use the words of a famous political writer, without adopting his malignancy), will visit with terrible reprisals the monopolists who shall persist in upholding the present corn laws.

\* It is estimated that our annual loss on corn alone is nine millions.

† *Wastrel*, in Lancashire phrase, an idle, debauched, and worthless spend-thrift—a word that may be useful in London.

We cannot do better than conclude with the words of an intelligent American, as they were addressed to an English traveller. The extract is taken from the preface to "Ferguson's Tour in Canada and a portion of the United States."

"Even with your present burden of debt, if your Government were to renounce all interference with the affairs of the continent, and keep no more force, land or naval, than is necessary for your own security, have no more wars, and diminish the expenditure as much as possible, you will grow so rapidly in the next fifty years that your debt would cease to be of any importance. I earnestly hope that the passage of the Reform Bill may be only the prelude to an entire change of system ; and that your successors may feel, as we do here, that wars do not promote the prosperity of a nation, and have the good sense to avoid them."

# RUSSIA.

1836.

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“It is an identity of language, habits, and character, and not of the soil or the name of a master, which constitutes a great and powerful nation.”

MALTE-BRUN.

# ADVERTISEMENT.

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THIS is not a party pamphlet. Nor will Russia be found, as the title might seem to imply, to be exclusively the subject of inquiry in the following pages. If, as has lately been shown in England, at certain periods in the history of a nation, it becomes necessary to review its principles of domestic policy, for the purpose of adapting the government to the changing and improving condition of its people—it must be equally the part of a wise community to alter the maxims by which its foreign relations have, in past times, been regulated, in conformity with the changes that have taken place over the entire globe.

Can the “States’ System” which was applicable to the international affairs of Europe a century ago, be suited to the circumstances of to-day?—or, on the contrary, do not those portentous events which have intervened—in the rise and paramount commercial importance of free America, the downfall of the colony system, and the application of the doctrines of free trade—demand reforms of proportionate magnitude in the foreign policy of Great Britain? These important changes have, in the latter part of this pamphlet, for the first time, been taken into consideration with reference to the question of Turkey; and, without presuming, for a moment, to claim for our mode of treating this important subject the slightest attention, we may be allowed to add, that the mighty influence which such changes are now exercising over our destinies ought to be duly studied and appreciated by those who, as statesmen, are permitted to regulate the external affairs of this commercial empire.

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## NOTE.

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THIS pamphlet, which was published in the year 1836, was suggested by the alarm of a Russian invasion, which prevailed in that year, and which led to an increase in our navy of five thousand men. Although the views of what is now known as the “Eastern Question,” which Mr. Cobden has embodied in the following pages, correspond with those to which he and

his distinguished friend, Mr. Bright, gave such forcible and eloquent expression during the war with Russia, it is scarcely too much to say, that political students generally will peruse the pamphlet with as much zest as if it were now for the first time issued from the press ; and, indeed, the arguments and illustrations by which Mr. Cobden sought to controvert the popular apprehension of Russian power and ambition which then existed, have a close bearing upon more recent phases of public opinion. But at the time Mr. Cobden wrote he had to contend with traditional illusions, which not only inspired large classes of the community with an alarm as mischievous as it was vague and unreal, but formed a no unimportant part of the political creed of statesmen.

The reader can judge of the manner in which Mr. Cobden acquitted himself of his arduous task ; but an authentic anecdote will best illustrate the effect which the perusal of his work produced on the minds of public men, who, from the eminent position they occupied thirty years ago, were best qualified to form a critical opinion on its merits. Shortly after the publication of the pamphlet Lord Durham, who was then the English ambassador at St. Petersburg, received a copy of it in his official bag. He read it, and was so much impressed with the clearness and force of its leading ideas, that he at once wrote to his friend, the late lamented Mr. Joseph Parkes, and requested him to discover the name of the author. Mr. Parkes obtained Mr. Cobden's permission to mention his name ; and when, two years later, his Lordship returned to England, he desired Mr. Parkes to bring about a meeting between himself and Mr. Cobden. The result was that Mr. Cobden dined with Lord Durham, who, after an evening of friendly conversation, was still more struck with his new acquaintance. His subsequent prophetic and sagacious remark to Mr. Parkes deserves to be recorded. "Mark my words," he said, "Cobden will one day be one of the first men in England."

It only remains to add that Mr. Cobden made a tour through Turkey and the East in the year following the publication of his brochure, but that he did not visit Russia until the year 1846, when the abolition of the corn laws enabled him at once to recruit his health, and to disseminate free trade principles in other countries, by a few months of continental travel.

# R U S S I A.

## CHAPTER I.

### RUSSIA, TURKEY, AND ENGLAND.

It has been somewhere remarked, that, in former times some false alarms usually preceded or accompanied a new war. Thus, in 1792, Mr. Saunderson, then Lord Mayor, and soon afterwards made a Baronet, got up in his place in the House of Commons, and declared that he knew of a plot to surprise the Tower of London; all England was thrown into a fear of the Jacobins, and the anti-Jacobin war soon followed; but of the conspiracy to seize the Tower not another word was heard. Again, at the close of the short peace, or, more properly speaking, the *truce* of Amiens, it was alleged, in all the public prints, and subsequently inserted in the declaration of war, that Bonaparte had armies ready to invade England; and, in proof, it was adduced that instructions had been given to the French diplomatic and commercial agents to take surveys and soundings of our coasts and harbours.\* The people, thus deluded into an anti-Bonaparte war, forgot that many different surveys of every part of our coast, and of every harbour in the British dominions, might have been purchased for a few

\* "When once Persia fell under the yoke of Russia, one great obstacle to the acquirement of that which constituted our possessions in the East would be removed. He hoped that its success would be impossible—it was at least problematical; but this, at all events, was in no degree doubtful, that the matter was very seriously entertained at St. Petersburg. *In the War Office there, maps and plans, drawn expressly for the purpose, were deposited, showing not only the practicability of such a scheme of aggrandisement, but the various modes in which it might be best carried into effect, and the way the several military stations necessary for the purpose might be established.*"—Lord Dudley Stuart's Speech, House of Commons, Feb. 19, 1836.

shillings at every hydrographer's or chart-seller's ; and that no foreigner, by years of study, could have added an iota to the information contained in the various pilot-books then used in the different channels. We live in other times ; but still the constitution of our Government, which gives to the Court the power of declaring war, and to the Commons the privilege of providing for its expenses, remains the same ; and, however we may be verging upon a more secure era, we confess we think there is sufficient ground in the predominant influence which an aristocracy, essentially warlike, exercises at this moment in the Ministry, to warn our readers and the public against the passion for a foolish war, with which the minds of the people have been latterly very industriously inflamed. We do not charge the noble Lords who form the great majority in the Cabinet with a design to stimulate the country to demand hostilities with Russia ; the policy of the Ministry may probably have stopped far short of that, and aimed only at accomplishing an augmentation of the army or navy. Certain it is, however, that *one active mind*\* has, during the last two years, materially influenced the tone of several of the newspapers of this kingdom, in reference to the affairs of Russia and Turkey, and incessantly roused public opinion, through every accessible channel of the periodical press, against the former and in favour of the latter nation ; certain it is, moreover, that this individual, if not previously an agent of the Government, has latterly become so, by being appointed to a diplomatic post in our embassy at Constantinople.† How far this indefatigable spirit has been successful in his design to diffuse a feeling of terror and a spirit of hatred towards Russia in the public mind, may be ascertained by any one who will take the trouble to sound the opinions of his next neighbour upon the subject, whom, it is ten to one, he will find an alarmist about the subtlety of Pozzo di Borgo, the cruelty of the Czar, and the barbarism of the Russians.

\* [Mr. David Urquhart.]

† We state these facts from personal knowledge.



He most likely will find him to possess but vague feelings of apprehension, and very little exactness of knowledge upon the subject; he will not know, perhaps, precisely, whether the province of Moldavia be on the right or the left bank of the Danube, or whether the Balkan and the ancient Hæmus be an identical range of mountains; he will have but an indistinct acquaintance with the geography of Asia Minor, and probably confound the Bosphorus with the Dardanelles; but still he shall be profoundly alarmed at the encroachments of Russia in those quarters, and quite willing to go to war to prevent them. Such, we gravely assert, is the feeling, and such are the opinions of the great majority of those who take their doctrines from some of the newspapers at this moment, upon the question of Russian aggrandisement. Believing that the fate of Turkey, and the designs of her great northern neighbour, are by no means matters that affect the interests of England so vitally as some writers imagine, we are yet more directly opposed to them, by entertaining a conviction that, even if the worst of their forebodings were to arrive—if even Russia were to subjugate Turkey—England would gain rather than suffer by the event. In order to state our views fairly upon this interesting and difficult question, it will be necessary for us to glance, hastily, at the past history and the present condition, as respects the government and resources, of the two empires; and then, having assumed that Turkey had fallen a prey to the ambition of Russia, we will weigh the probable consequences of, and meet the possible objections to, such an event.

But, before entering upon our task, we would disavow all intention of advocating the cause of Russian violence and aggression. It can only be necessary to say thus much at the outset of this pamphlet in order to prevent the reader from anticipating our design with an undue prepossession respecting our motives; for the whole spirit and purpose of the following pages will show that we are hostile to the Government of St. Petersburg, and to every principle of its foreign and domestic

policy. Our sympathies flow, altogether, towards those free institutions which are favourable to the peace, wealth, education, and happiness of mankind.

In comparing the Turkish Government with that of Russia, however, it will be found that the latter is immeasurably the superior in its laws and institutions; and if, in the remarks which we shall have occasion to make, we should appear to bestow commendations upon that northern people, we entreat that the reader will consider us to be only speaking in comparison with its more barbarous and despotic Mahometan neighbour, and not from any abstract predilection in favour of the Russian nation. Again, whilst we argue that we should, in all probability, benefit by the subjugation of Turkey by Russia, we do not attempt to justify, or even to palliate, the forcible spoliation of its territory; still less do we advocate the intervention of the English Government, for the purpose of promoting such a conquest. Our sole object is to persuade the public that the wisest policy for England is, to take no part in those remote quarrels. To accomplish this end we will endeavour to examine every distinct source of danger which the advocates for our interference in the affairs of states a thousand miles distant, adduce as arguments in defence of their policy. We shall claim the right of putting the question entirely upon a footing of self-interest. We do not, for a moment, imagine that it is necessary for us to show that we are not called upon to preserve the peace and good order of the entire world. Indeed, those writers and speakers who argue in favour of our intervention in the affairs of Russia and Turkey, invariably do so upon the pretence that our commerce, our colonies, or our national existence, are endangered by the encroachments of the former empire. We trust the futility of such fears will be shown by the following appeal to reason, experience, and facts.

The Turks, a race of the Tartars of Asia, conquered Constantinople in 1453. In the succeeding century, this people

struck terror into all Europe by their conquests. They subdued Egypt, the Barbary States, and all the Arabian coasts on the Red Sea. In Europe, they conquered the Crimea and the countries along the Danube; they overran Hungary and Transylvania, and repeatedly laid siege to Vienna. At sea, notwithstanding the gallant resistance of the Venetians, they subdued Rhodes, Cyprus, and all the Greek islands. Down to our own time, the Turks governed a territory so vast and fertile that, in ancient ages, it comprised Egypt, Phœnicia, Syria, Greece, Carthage, Thrace, Pontus, Bithynia, Cappadocia, Epirus, and Armenia, besides other less renowned empires. From three of these states went forth, at various epochs, conquerors who vanquished and subjected the then entire known world. The present lamentable condition of this fine territory, so renowned in former times, arises from no change in the seasons or defalcation of nature. It still stretches from 34 to 48 degs. north, within the temperate zone, and upon the same parallels of latitude as Spain, France, and all the best portion of the United States. "Mount Hæmus," says Malte-Brun, "is still covered with verdant forests; the plains of Thrace, Macedonia, and Thessaly yield abundant and easy harvests to the husbandman; a thousand ports and a thousand gulfs are observed on the coasts, peninsulas, and islands. The calm billows of these tranquil seas still bathe the base of mountains covered with vines and olive trees. But the populous and numerous towns mentioned by ancient writers have been changed into deserts beneath a despotic government." All the authorities upon this country assure us that the soil of many parts of Turkey is more fruitful than the richest plains of Sicily. When grazed by the rudest plough, it yields a more abundant harvest than the finest fields between the Eure and the Loire, the granary of France. Mines of silver, copper, and iron are still existing, and salt abounds in the country. Cotton, tobacco, and silk might be made the staple exports of this region, and their culture admits of almost unlimited extension throughout the

Turkish territory ; whilst some of the native wines are equal to those of Burgundy. Almost every species of tree flourishes in European Turkey. The heights of the Danube are clad with apple, pine, cherry, and apricot trees ; whole forests of these may be seen in Wallachia ; and they cover the hills of Thrace, Macedonia, and Epirus. The olive, orange, mastic, fig, pomegranate—the laurel, myrtle, and nearly all the beautiful and aromatic shrubs and plants—are natural to the soil. Nor are the animal productions less valuable than those of vegetable life. The finest horses have been drawn from this quarter to improve the breeds of Western Europe ; and the rich pastures of European Turkey are probably the best adapted in the world for rearing the largest growths of cattle and sheep.

That, in a region so highly favoured, the population should have retrograded, whilst surrounded by abundance ; that its wealth and industry should have been annihilated ; and that commerce should be banished from those rivers and harbours that first called it into existence—must be accounted for by remembering that the finest soil, the most genial climate, or the brightest intellectual and physical gifts of human nature are as nothing when subjected to the benumbing influences of the Government of Constantinople. It is necessary to refer to the religion and the maxims of its professors, which constitute all that serves as a substitute for law with this Mahometan people, if we would know the causes why ignorance, barbarism, and poverty now overspread the fairest lands of Asia and Europe. The Turks profess, as is well known, the most bigoted and intolerant branch of the Mahometan faith ; they regard with equal detestation the Persian Shiite and the follower of Christ ; nay, the more zealous amongst their doctors contend that it is as meritorious to slay one Shiite as twenty Christians. Their colleges, or madresses, teach nothing but the Mahometan theology ; many years being spent in mastering such knotty points as, *whether the feet should be washed at rising or only rubbed with the dry hand*. As the Orthodox Turk, of whatever

rank, is taught to despise all other fields of learning than the Koran, under the belief that Mahomet has, in that sacred book, recorded all that his faithful followers are required to know—it follows, of course, that he is religiously ignorant of all that forms the education of a Frenchman, German, or Italian; he knows nothing of the countries beyond the bounds of the Sultan's dominions. The Turks (unlike the liberal Persians, who have made some advances in science) are unacquainted with the uses of the commonest scientific instruments, which are exhibited to them by travellers just as we do to amuse children. Notwithstanding that this people have been for nearly four centuries in absolute possession of all the noblest remains of ancient art, they have evinced no taste for architecture or sculpture, whilst painting and music are equally unknown to them. Nor have they been less careless about the preservation of ancient, than the creation of modern, works of labour and ingenuity. They found, at the conquest of the Eastern Empire, splendid and substantial public and private edifices, which have been barbarously destroyed, or allowed to crumble beneath the hand of time; and huts of wood, compared by travellers to large boxes\* standing in rows with their lids open upon hinges, compose the streets of modern Constantinople. and other large cities. Bridges, aqueducts, and harbours, the precious and durable donations of remote yet more enlightened generations, have all suffered a like fate; and the roads, even in the vicinity of the capital, which in former ages maintained an unrivalled celebrity, are described, by the last tourist,† to be now in so broken and neglected a state as to present a barrier against the progress of artillery as complete as though it had been designed by an engineer for that purpose.

The cause of all this decay is ascribed to the genius of the Turkish Government—a fierce, unmitigated, military despotism—allied with the fanaticism of a brutalising

\* Willis—"Pencillings by the Way."

† Quin—"Voyage down the Danube."

religion, which teaches its followers to rely on the sword, and to disdain all improvement and labour. The Sultan, who is the vicegerent of the Prophet, holds both temporal and spiritual authority over his followers; and this enables him to sway the lives and destinies of the people with an absoluteness greater than was ever enjoyed by any tyrant of ancient times; unchecked, too, by the growth of cities, the increase of knowledge, or the accumulation of wealth—all which are alike incompatible with the present government of the country. Every man who is invested with absolute power is at liberty to delegate his power unimpaired to another; the Sultan is the vicegerent of the Prophet; every Pasha is a representative of the Sultan; and every soldier who carries an order the representative of the Pasha. The situations of Pasha and Cadi, or judge, are all given to the highest bidders, who are removable at will, and, of course, take care to indemnify themselves at the expense of the governed. “It is a fact of public notoriety,” says Thornton,\* “that governments of every description are openly sold at the Porte; they are held for the term of one year only, and, at the ensuing *bairam*, the leases must be renewed or transferred to a less parsimonious competitor. In the public registers, the precise value of every important post under government is recorded; and the regular remittance of the taxes and tribute is the only acknowledged criterion of upright administration.” It is a fundamental principle that all the property conquered by the Turks belongs to the Sultan. Hence the Christians are accounted the slaves of the conqueror, and they are only allowed to live by paying a heavy tribute, the receipt for which bears that it is the ransom of their heads!

Probably, in nothing has this people been more unduly represented than in the praises which have been bestowed on their unrestricted principles of trade. The Turk knows nothing, and cares as little, about freedom of commerce; he

\* “Present State of Turkey.”

disdains trade himself, and despises it in others ; and, if he has failed to imitate more civilised (though, certainly, in this point of view, not wiser) nations, by fortifying his coasts with custom-houses, it is certainly from no wise principle of taxation, but simply because such a circuitous method of fiscal exaction would be far too complicated and wearisome for the minds of Ottoman governors, who prefer the simpler mode of raising a revenue by the direct extortion of the Pasha or the Aga. Far from favouring the extension of commerce, one great cause of the present barbarism and the past unhappy condition of Turkey is to be found in the aversion and contempt which its people bear for trade. "The Jews," says Hadji-Khalfa, the Turkish writer, in speaking of Salonica, "employ many workmen in their different manufactories—support a number of schools, in which there are not fewer than two hundred masters. The caravans that travel from Salonica to Semlin, Vienna, and Leipsig, are loaded with cotton, tobacco, carpets, and leather. It is a shame," continues the orthodox Hadji-Khalfa, "that so many Jews are allowed to remain in Salonica ; the excitement thus given to trade is apt to blind true believers." The fate of those vast and rich tracts bordering upon the Black Sea and its tributary rivers affords ample proof that the genius of Mahometanism is inimical to the interests of commerce and agriculture. The trade carried on by the ancients upon the shores of the Euxine was very considerable, and gave life and wealth to several populous cities mentioned in history. In more modern times the Genoese formed establishments upon the coasts of the Black Sea, and they took the lead in navigating those waters down to the fifteenth century. At the taking of Constantinople, the Turks closed the Black Sea against the ships of Europe ; and from that time its navigation was lost to the commerce of the world for a period of more than three centuries.

By the treaty of Kanardgi, in 1774, the ships of Russia were allowed to pass the Bosphorus ; other countries soon after-

wards obtained similar privileges ; some restrictions, which it was still attempted to keep up, were removed by the treaty between the Russians and Turks in 1829 ; and the Black Sea is now, for commercial purposes, as open as the Mediterranean. The importance of this vast extension of commercial navigation cannot, at present, be fully appreciated, owing to the unfortunate condition of the population which inhabits those regions. Some idea may, however, be formed of the extent and probable importance of those great rivers which fall into the Black Sea, by the following estimate furnished by Malte-Brun :—

If all the rivers in Europe be as	.	.	.	1.000
Those which flow into the Black Sea	.	.	.	0.273
Those which flow into the Mediterranean	.	.	.	0.144

Of all the features belonging to the Turkish national character, there is none less favourable than that which relates to the neglect and contempt with which that people has invariably treated affairs of trade. Whether it be owing to that dogma of their creed which forbids the receiving interest for money, or to that other familiar text of the Koran, which says, “There is but one law, and that forbids all communication with infidels ;” certain it is that such an example as a Turkish merchant transacting matters of commerce with a foreign trader was scarcely ever known in that country. This is an anomaly the more striking, when we refer to other countries, less advantageously situated, as, for instance, China, where trade has acquired an importance, and is conducted on a system the growth of ages of good government, and of a like period of patient industry in the people. Nothing but a tyrannical despotism, at once sanguinary and lawless, could have had the effect of repelling commerce from the superb harbour of Constantinople ; but, alas ! the thousand ships which might find secure anchorage there would seek in vain for the rich freights of silk, cotton, and wool which ought to await their coming : such is the character of its people and



rulers, that no native capitalists have ever been emboldened to accumulate a store of merchandise to tempt the rapacity of the Sultan ; and vessels which trade to Constantinople have frequently occasion to go to Salonica, Smyrna, or some other port for return cargoes.

Before we turn away from this hasty and assuredly not very pleasing glance at the Ottoman nation, it would be uncandid if we omitted to notice the imputed virtues of the Turks ; foremost amongst which stands charity—a quality enjoined to all true believers by the words of Mahomet, and which includes within its operation the inferior animals. They are reputed to be honourable in their dealings, and faithful to their words—characteristics of the haughty masters, as lying and chicane are natural to the slave. The Turks are forbidden the use of wine : but then they console themselves by substituting the eternal coffee, tobacco, and opium, and by other sensual indulgences.

“We turn,” in the words of a great writer, “from the soil of barbarism and the crescent, to a country whose inhabitants participate in the blessings of Christianity and European civilisation.”

Russia comprises one-half of Europe, one-third of Asia, and a portion of America ; and includes within its bounds nearly sixty millions, or a sixteenth portion of the human race. Its territory stretches in length from the Black Sea to the confines of Upper Canada ; and from the border of China to the Arctic Sea in width. The stupendous size of the Russian Empire has excited the wonder and alarm of timid writers, who forget “that it is an identity of language, habits, and character, and not the soil or the name of a master, which constitutes a great and powerful nation.” Ruling over eighty different nations or tribes, the autocrat of all the Russias claims the allegiance of people of every variety of race, tongue, and religion. Were it possible to transport to one common centre of his empire the gay opera lounge of St. Petersburg, habited in the Parisian mode ; the fierce Bashkir of the Ural Mountain, clad in rude

armour, and armed with bow and arrows ; the Crimean, with his camel, from the southern steppes ; and the Esquimaux, who traverses with his dogs the frozen regions of the north—these fellow-subjects of one potentate would encounter each other with all the surprise and ignorance of individuals meeting from England, China, Peru, and New Holland ; *nor would the time or expense incurred in the journey be greater in the latter than the former interview.* It must be obvious to every reflecting mind that vast deductions must be made from the written and statistical resources of a nation possessing no unison of religious or political feeling, when put in competition with other empires, identified in faith, language, and national characteristics. The popular mind has been, however, greatly misled by many writers on the Russian Empire, who have sought to impress their readers with the idea of the overwhelming size of its territory, and who have at the same time wilfully or negligently omitted to mention other facts, which, if taken in connection, serve to render that very magnitude of surface a source of weakness rather than power. We are furnished by Malte-Brun with some tables of the relative densities of the population of the European empires, which will help to illustrate our views upon this subject, and from which we give an extract :—

	Inhabitants.
Russia, for each square league . . . . .	181
Prussia . . . . .	792
France . . . . .	1063
England . . . . .	1457

Now the same law applies to communities as to physics—in proportion as you condense you strengthen, and as you draw out you weaken bodies ; and, according to this rule, the above table, which makes Prussia more than four times as closely peopled as Russia, would, bearing in mind the advantages of her denser population, give to the former power an equality of might with her unwieldy neighbour, which we have no doubt is

quite consistent with the truth ; whilst the same tabular test if applied to Russia, France, and England, would assign much the greater share of power to the two latter nations ; which experience has demonstrated to be the fact. Here, then, we have the means of exemplifying by a very simple appeal to figures (ever the best reasoning weapons) how the vastness of territory of the Russians is the cause of debility rather than of strength. It would be a trite illustration of a self-evident truism if we were to adduce as a proof of our argument the practice in military tactics. What general ever dreamed of scattering his troops by way of increasing their power ? Bonaparte gained his terrible battles by manœuvring great masses of men in smaller limits than any preceding commanders.

But the same geographer supplies us with a graduated scale of the relative taxation of these countries, which affords a yet more convincing proof of the disadvantageous position of Russia.

[illegible]

Now, assuming, as we may safely do, that these governments draw the utmost possible revenue from their subjects, what a disproportion here is between the wealth of the closely peopled Britain and the poverty of the scantily populated Russia ! We find, too, that the gradation of wealth is in the direct proportion to the density of the inhabitants of the four countries. Here, then, we have a double source of weakness for Russia, which would operate in a duplicate ratio to her disadvantage, in case that nation were plunged into a war with either of those other states ; for, whilst her armies must necessarily be mustered from greater distances at proportionate cost, and with less ability on her part to bear those charges, her rivals would possess troops more compactly positioned, and, at the same

time, the greater means of transporting them :—in a word, the one party would require the funds, and not possess them, whilst the other would comparatively speaking have the money and not want it. A necessary evil attends the wide-spread character of the population of Russia, in the absence of those large towns which serve as centres of intelligence and nurses of civilisation in other countries. Thus, in those vast regions, we have the cities of

St. Petersburg, with a population of	.	.	305,000
Moscow	.	.	190,000
Warsaw	.	.	117,000
Kasan	.	.	50,000
Kiew	.	.	40,000

whilst we find the remainder of the large places on the map of Russia to be only in size upon a par with the third-rate towns of England. That in a country of such vast extent, and comprising sixty millions of people, and where so few populous cities exist, the great mass of the inhabitants are living in poverty, ignorance, and barbarism, scarcely rising above a state of nature, must be apparent. Tribes of Cossacks and of Tartars, wandering over the low countries of Caucasia, own a formal allegiance to Russia. Other hordes, dignified by the alarmist writers on the subject of Russian greatness with the title of *nations*—such as the Circassians, the Georgians, the Mingrelians, with more than thirty other tribes, some Christian, others Mahometan, or of a mixed creed, occupying the mountainous regions of the Caucasus—are wholly or partially subdued to the dominion of the Czar. These fierce tribes are addicted to all the rude habits of savages; they live by the chase, or the cultivation of a little millet; they commit barbarous outrages, and buy and sell each other for slaves—often disposing of their own children, brothers, and sisters to the Turks. Against these refractory and half-subdued neighbours the Russians are compelled to keep fortresses along the frontier.

If we pass to Northern Russia, we find the Samoiedes, a people enduring nearly six months of perpetual night, and enjoying, in requital, a day of two months ; with them, corn is sown, ripened, and reaped in sixty days. In the governments of Wologda, Archangel, and Olonetz (for even in this almost uninhabitable region man has established his ministerial arrangements and political divisions), the climate is of such a nature that human industry can hardly contend against the elements, and the scanty produce of his labour enables the husbandman scarcely to protract a painful and sometimes precarious existence. Trees disappear on the sterile plains—the plants are stunted—corn withers—the marshy meadows are covered with rushes and mosses—and the whole of vegetable nature proclaims the vicinity of the Pole.

Over these desolate wastes, a traveller might journey five hundred miles, and not encounter one solitary human habitation. The government or province of Orenburg is larger than the entire kingdom of Prussia, and yet contains only a population of one million souls !

There are, however, vast districts—as, for example, the whole of Little Russia, and the Ukraine—of fertile territory, equal in richness to any part of Europe ; and it has been estimated that Russia contains more than 750,000 square miles of land, of a quality not inferior to the best portions of Germany, and upon which a population of two hundred millions of people might find subsistence. Here, then, is the field upon which the energies of the government and the industry of its subjects should be, for the next century, exclusively devoted ; and if the best interests of Russia were understood—or if its government would attain to that actual power which ignorant writers proclaim for it in the possession of boundless wastes and impenetrable forests—she should cease the wars of the sword, and begin the battle with the wilderness, by constructing railroads, building bridges, deepening rivers ; by fostering the accumulation of capital, the growth of cities, and the

increase of civilisation and freedom. *These are the only sources of power and wealth in an age of improvement*; and until Russia, like America, draws from her plains, mountains, and rivers those resources which can be developed only by patient labour—vain are her boasts of geographical extent. As well might the inhabitants of the United States vaunt of their unexplored possessions west of the Rocky Mountains, or England plume herself upon the desert tracts of New Holland.

If such be the true interests of Russia, it will be admitted, then, that the conquest of those extensive and almost depopulated regions now withering under the government of the Sultan would only be a wider departure from this enlightened policy. Assuming that such a conquest had taken place, it follows that the population of the Russian empire would become still more diversified in character and of a yet more heterogeneous nature; whilst it, at the same time, would diffuse itself over a far wider surface of territory; and, if the arguments which we have offered are founded in reason, then the first effects of all this must be, that Russia would, herself, be weakened by this still greater distension of her dominion. What, then, becomes of our apprehensions about the safety of India, or the possession of the Ionian Islands—the freedom of the Mediterranean—our maritime supremacy—or the thousand other dangers with which we are threatened as the immediate consequence of the possession of Constantinople by the Russians?

If we would form a fair estimate of the probable results of that event, we ought to glance, for a moment, at the conduct of the same people under somewhat similar circumstances in another quarter. The policy pursued by Russia on the Gulf of Finland (where St. Petersburg arose, like an exhalation from the marshes of the Neva), when those districts were wrested, by its founder, from the maniac Charles XII., would, we have a right to assume, be imitated by the same nation on the shores of the Bosphorus. Let us here pause to do homage

to that noblest example of history, far surpassing the exploits of Alexander or Napoleon—that sublime act of devotion at the shrine of commerce and civilisation, offered by Peter the Great, who, to instruct his subjects in the science of navigation and the art of shipbuilding, voluntarily descended from a throne, where he was surrounded by the pomp and splendour of a great potentate, and became a menial workman in the dockyards of Saardam and Deptford! We vindicate not his crimes or his vices—the common attributes of the condition of society in which he lived; his cruelty was but the natural fruit of irresponsible power in savage life; and his acts of grossness and intemperance were regarded by the nation as honourable exploits: but the genius that enabled him to penetrate the thick clouds of prejudice and ignorance which enveloped his people, and to perceive, afar off, the power which civilisation and commerce confer upon nations, was the offspring of his own unaided spirit, and will ever be worthy of peculiar honour at the hands of the historian. Everybody knows under what trying disadvantages this metropolis, planted in the midst of unhealthy and barren marshes, and in a latitude that, by the ancients, was placed beyond the limits of civilisation, sprung from the hands of its founder, and stood forth the most wonderful phenomenon of the 18th century. At present, this capital, which contains upwards of 300,000 inhabitants, and is termed, from the splendour of its public buildings, a city of palaces, can boast of scientific bodies which are in correspondence with all the learned societies of Europe. The government has sent out circumnavigators, who have made discoveries in remote regions of the globe. St. Petersburg contains museums of art and literature; some of the first specimens of sculpture and painting are to be seen in its public halls; its public libraries contain twice as many volumes as those of London; and the best collection of Chinese, Japanese, and Mongol books are to be found on their shelves. All the decencies and even elegancies of life, observable in Paris or

London, are found to prevail over this northern metropolis; and there is nothing in the streets (unless it be the costume of the people, necessary to meet the exigencies of the climate) to remind the eye of the traveller that he is not in one of the more western Christian capitals.

We may fairly assume that, were Russia to seize upon the capital of Turkey, the consequences would not at least be less favourable to humanity and civilisation than those which succeeded to her conquests on the Gulf of Finland a century ago. The seraglio of the Sultan would be once more converted into the palace of a Christian monarch; the lasciviousness of the harem would disappear at the presence of his Christian empress; those walls which now resound only to the voice of the eunuch and the slave, and witness nothing but deeds of guilt and dishonour, would then echo the footsteps of travellers and the voices of men of learning, or behold the assemblage of high-souled and beautiful women, of exalted birth and rare accomplishments, the virtuous companions of ambassadors, tourists, and merchants from all the capitals of Europe. We may fairly and reasonably assume that such consequences would follow the conquest of Constantinople; and can any one doubt that, if the government of St. Petersburg were transferred to the shores of the Bosphorus, a splendid and substantial European city would, in less than twenty years, spring up in the place of those huts which now constitute the capital of Turkey?—that noble public buildings would arise, learned societies flourish, and the arts prosper?—that from its natural beauties and advantages, Constantinople would become an attractive resort for civilised Europeans?—that the Christian religion, operating instantly upon the laws and institutions of the country, would ameliorate the condition of its people?—that the slave market, which is now polluting the Ottoman capital centuries after the odious traffic has been banished from the soil of Christian Europe, would be abolished?—that the demoralising and unnatural law of polygamy, under which the fairest portion of



the creation becomes an object of brutal lust and an article of daily traffic, would be discountenanced?—and that the plague, no longer fostered by the filth and indolence of the people, would cease to ravage countries placed in the healthiest latitudes and blessed with the finest climate in the world? Can any rational mind doubt that these changes would follow from the occupation of Constantinople by Russia, every one of which, so far as the difference in the cases permitted, has already been realised more than a century in St. Petersburg? But the interests of England, it is alleged, would be endangered by such changes. We deny that the progress of improvement and the advance of civilisation can be inimical to the welfare of Great Britain. To assert that *we*, a commercial and manufacturing people, have an interest in retaining the fairest regions in Europe in barbarism and ignorance—that *we* are benefited because poverty, slavery, polygamy, and the plague abound in Turkey—is a fallacy too gross even for refutation.

One of the greatest dangers apprehended (for we set out with promising to answer the popular objections to the aggrandisement of Russia in this quarter) is, from the injury which would be inflicted upon our trade; which trade, exclusively of that portion of our nominal exports to Turkey, which really goes to Persia, does not much exceed half a million yearly, an amount so contemptible when we recollect the population, magnitude, and natural fertility of that empire, that it might safely be predicted, under no possible form of government could it be diminished. But Russia is said, by the panegyrists of Turkey, to be an anti-commercial country. We have already seen that to Russian influence we are indebted for the liberation of the Black Sea from the thralldom in which it had been held by Turkish jealousy for three hundred years. If, however, we would judge of the probable conduct of that people after the conquest of Constantinople, we must appeal to the experience which they have given us of their commercial policy at St. Petersburg. The first Dutch merchant vessel (whose

captain was welcomed with honours and loaded with presents by Peter the Great) entered that harbour in 1703 ; and at the present time fifteen hundred vessels clear out annually from the capital of Russia for all parts of the world. The internal navigation of this vast empire has been improved with a patience and perseverance, in the last century, which, bearing in mind the impediments of climate and soil, are deserving our astonishment and admiration, and which contrasts strangely with the supineness of that Mahometan people whose habits are, according to some writers, so favourable to trade, but in whose country not one furlong of canal or navigable stream, the labour of Turkish hands, has been produced in upwards of three hundred years ! Three great lines of navigation, one of them 1,400 miles long, extend through Russia, by which the waters of the Baltic, the Caspian, and the Black Sea are brought into connection ; and by which channels the provinces of the Volga, the plains of the Ukraine, and the forests and mines of Siberia, transmit their products to the markets of Moscow and St. Petersburg. \* Much as may with truth be alleged against the lust for aggrandisement with which Russian counsels have been actuated, yet if we examine, we shall find that it is by the love of improvement—the security given by laws to life and property—but, above all, owing to the encouragement afforded to commerce—that this empire has, more than by conquest, been brought forth from her frozen regions, to hold a first rank among the nations of Europe.

The laws for the encouragement of trade are direct and important ; and their tendency is to destroy the privileges of the nobles, by raising up a middle class precisely in the same way by which our own Plantagenets countervailed the powers of the barons. Every Russian carrying on trade must be a burgher, and a registered member of a guild or company ; and of these

\* Boats may, we are told, go from St. Petersburg to the Caspian Sea without unloading.

guilds there are three ranks, according to the capitals of the members:—

10 to 50,000 roubles\* entitles to foreign commerce, exempts from corporal punishment, and qualifies to drive about in a carriage and pair.

5 to 10,000 roubles, the members of this guild are confined to inland trade.

1 to 5,000 roubles includes petty shopkeepers.

Besides these guilds for merchants, the porters of the large towns associate together in bodies, called *artels*, resembling, in some respects, the company of wine coopers in London, for the purpose of guaranteeing persons employing one of them from any loss or damage to his goods. Now, in a country, however far removed from a state of freedom and civilisation (*and we maintain that, in these respects, the condition of Russia is in arrears of all other Christian states*), where laws such as these exist, for encouraging industry, conferring privileges upon traders, and doing honour to the accumulation of capital—in that country prodigious strides have been already taken on the only true path to enlightenment and liberty. *On this path the Turks have disdained to advance a single step.* Here we have at one glance the distinctive characters of the Turkish and Russian, the Slavonic and Mongolian races—the former unchanging and stationary, the latter progressive and imitative. The very stringent laws which Russia has passed against the importation of our fabrics, are indications of the same variety of character; evincing a desire to rival us in mechanical industry: while the apathy with which the Turk sees every article of our manufactures enter his ports, without being stimulated to study the construction of a loom or spinning frame, is but another manifestation of his inferior structure of intellect.

To return, then, to the oft agitated question, as to the danger of our commerce consequent upon the conquest of Constantinople by Russia—are we not justified in assuming that our

\* A silver rouble is about 3s. 2d.

exports to Turkey would exceed half-a-million per annum, if that fertile region were possessed by a nation governed under laws for the fostering of trade, such as we have just described? Some persons argue, indeed, that, although the productive industry of those countries would augment under such supposed circumstances, still, so great is the enmity of the Russians towards England, that we should be excluded from all participation in its increase. But how stands the case if we appeal to the policy of that people, as already experienced, and find that—notwithstanding that our own tariff at this time interposes a duty of 100 per cent. against the two staple articles of Russian produce, timber and corn—the amount of trade carried on between Great Britain and St. Petersburg is equal to that of the latter with all the rest of the world together; for of the 1,500 vessels clearing annually from that port, 750 are British? But it is contended that, if Russia were put into possession of the Turkish provinces, she would possess, within her own limits, such a command of all the natural products as might enable her to close the Hellespont against the world, and begin a Japanese system of commercial policy. To this we reply, that commerce cannot, in the present day, turn hermit. It will not answer for a people to try, in the words of Sheridan, to get “an atmosphere and a sun of its own.” Nay, better still—no country can carry on great financial transactions except through the medium of England. We are told by Mr. Rothschild, in his evidence before the legislature, that London is the metropolis of the moneyed world; that no large commercial operations can possibly be carried on, but they must be, more or less, under the influence of this common centre of the financial system, round which the less affluent states, like the humbler orbs of the solar creation, revolve, and from whence they must be content to borrow lustre and nourishment. Supposing, indeed, that Russia were in possession of Turkey, and should commence a system of non-intercourse (we are under the necessity of making these whimsical suppositions in order to

reply to grounds of argument which are actually advanced every day by *grave* writers upon this question), could she carry on those extensive manufactures which some people predict, without deriving a supply of raw ingredients from other countries? It will suffice on this head if we observe, that to enable any one of our manufacturers to conduct the simplest branch of his mechanical and chemical industry, it is requisite that he be duly supplied with materials, the growth of every corner of the globe;—the commonest printed calico, worn by the poorest peasant's wife, is the united product of the four quarters of the earth; the cotton of America, the indigo of Asia, the gum of Africa, and the madder of Europe, must all be brought from those remote regions, and be made to combine with fifty other as apparently heterogeneous commodities, by ingenious arts and processes, the results of ten thousand philosophical experiments—and all to produce a rustic's gown-piece! Whilst such are the exigencies of manufacturing industry, binding us in abject dependence upon all the countries of the earth, may we not hope that freedom of commerce, and an exemption from warfare, will be the inevitable fruits of the future growth of that mechanical and chemical improvement, the *germ* of which has only been planted in our day? Need we add one word to prove that Russia could not—unless she were to discover another chemistry, which should wholly alter the properties of matter—at the same time seclude herself from the trade of the rest of the world, and become a rich and great manufacturing or commercial nation? Wherever a country is found to favour foreign commerce, whether it be the United States, Russia, Holland, China, or Brazil (we speak only of commercial nations, and, of course, do not include France), it may infallibly be assumed, that England partakes more largely of the advantages of that traffic than any other state; and the same rule will continue to apply to the *increase* of the commerce of the world, in whatever quarter it may be, so long as the British people are distinguished by their industry, energy, and

ingenuity; and provided that their rulers shall keep pace in wise reforms and severe economy with the governments of their rivals. It follows, then, that, with reference to trade, there can be no ground of apprehension from Russia. If that people were to attempt to exclude all foreign traffic, they would enter at once upon the high road to barbarism, from which career there is no danger threatened to rich and civilised nations; if, on the other hand, that state continued to pursue a system favourable to foreign trade, then England would be found at Constantinople, as she has already been at St. Petersburg, reaping the greatest harvest of riches and power, from the augmentation of Russian imports.

By far the greater proportion of the writers and speakers upon the subject of the power of Russia either do not understand, or lose sight of the all-important question, What is the true source of national greatness? The path by which alone modern empires can hope to rise to supreme power and grandeur (would that we could impress this sentiment upon the mind of every statesman in Europe!) is that of labour and improvement. They who, pointing to the chart of Russia, shudder at her expanse of impenetrable forests, her wastes of eternal snow, her howling wildernesses, frowning mountains, and solitary rivers; or they who stand aghast at her boundless extent of fertile but uncultivated steppes, her millions of serfs, and her towns the abodes of poverty and filth—know nothing of the true origin, in modern and future times, of national power and greatness. This question admits of an appropriate illustration, by putting the names of a couple of heroes of Russian aggression and violence in contrast with two of their contemporaries, the champions of improvement in England. At the very period when Potemkin and Suwarrow were engaged in effecting their important Russian conquests in Poland and the Crimea, and whilst those monsters of carnage were filling the world with the lustre of their fame, and lighting up one-half of Europe with the conflagrations of war—two obscure

individuals, the one an optician and the other a barber, both equally disregarded by the chroniclers of the day, were quietly gaining victories in the realms of science, which have produced a more abundant harvest of wealth and power to their native country than has been acquired by all the wars of Russia during the last two centuries. Those illustrious commanders in the war of improvement, Watt and Arkwright, with a band of subalterns—the thousand ingenious and practical discoverers who have followed in their train—have, with their armies of artisans, conferred a power and consequence upon England, springing from successive triumphs in the physical sciences and the mechanical arts, and wholly independent of territorial increase—compared with which all that she owes to the evanescent exploits of her warrior heroes sinks into insignificance and obscurity. If we look into futurity, and speculate upon the probable career of one of these inventions, may we not with safety predict that the steam-engine—the perfecting of which belongs to our own age, and which even now is exerting an influence in the four quarters of the globe—will at no distant day produce moral and physical changes, all over the world, of a magnitude and permanency, surpassing the effects of all the wars and conquests which have convulsed mankind since the beginning of time ! England owes to the peaceful exploits of Watt and Arkwright, and not to the deeds of Nelson and Wellington, her commerce, which now extends to every corner of the earth, and which casts into comparative obscurity, by the grandeur and extent of its operations, the peddling ventures of Tyre, Carthage, and Venice, confined within the limits of an inland sea.

If we were to trace, step by step, the opposite careers of aggrandisement, to which we can only thus hastily glance—of England, pursuing the march of improvement within the area of four of her counties, by exploring the recesses of her mines, by constructing canals, docks, and railroads, by her mechanical inventions, and by the patience and ingenuity of her manufac-

turers in adapting their fabrics to meet the varying wants and tastes of every habitable latitude of the earth's surface—and of Russia, adhering to her policy of territorial conquests, by despoiling of provinces, the empires of Turkey, Persia, and Sweden, by subjugating in unwilling bondage the natives of Georgia and Circassia, and by seizing with robber hand the soil of Poland—if we were to trace these opposite careers of aggrandisement, what should we find to be the relative consequences to these two empires? England, with her steam-engine and spinning frame, has erected the standard of improvement, around which every nation of the world has already prepared to rally; she has, by the magic of her machinery, united for ever two remote hemispheres in the bonds of peace, by placing Europe and America in absolute and inextricable dependence on each other; England's industrious classes, through the energy of their commercial enterprise, are at this moment influencing the civilisation of the whole world, by stimulating the labour, exciting the curiosity, and promoting the taste for refinement of barbarous communities, and, above all, by acquiring and teaching to surrounding nations the beneficent attachment to peace. Such are the moral effects of improvement in Britain, against which Russia can oppose comparatively little but the example of violence, to which humanity points as a beacon to warn society from evil. And if we refer to the physical effects, if—for the sake of convincing minds which do not recognise the far more potent moral influences—we descend to a comparison of mere brute forces, we find still greater superiority resulting from ingenuity and labour. The manufacturing districts alone—even the four counties of England, comprising Lancashire, Yorkshire, Cheshire, and Staffordshire—could, at any moment, by means of the wealth drawn, by the skill and industry of its population, from the natural resources of this comparative speck of territory, combat with success the whole Russian empire! Liverpool and Hull, with their navies, and Manchester, Leeds, and Birmingham, with their



capitals, could blockade, within the waters of Cronstadt, the entire Russian marine, and annihilate the commerce of St. Petersburg. And, further, if we suppose that, during the next thirty years, Russia, adhering to her system of territorial aggrandisement, were to swallow up, successively, her neighbours, Persia and Turkey—whilst England, which we have imagined to comprise only the area of four counties, still persevered in her present career of mechanical ingenuity, the relative forces would, at the end of that time, yet be more greatly in favour of the peaceful and industrious empire. This mere speck on the ocean—without colonies, which are but the costly appendage\* of an aristocratic government—without wars, which have ever been but another aristocratic mode of plundering and oppressing commerce—would, with only a few hundred square leagues of surface, by means of the wealth which, by her arts and industry, she had accumulated, be the arbitress of the destiny of Russia, with its millions of square miles of territory. Liverpool and Hull, with their thousands of vessels, would be in a condition to dictate laws to the possessor of one-fourth part of the surface of the globe; they would then be enabled to blockade Russia in the Sea of Marmora, as they could now do in the Gulf of Finland—to deny her the freedom of the seas—to deprive her proud nobles of every foreign commodity and

\* Some people contend that our colonies are profitable to us because they consume our manufactures, although it is notorious that they do not buy a single commodity from us which they could procure cheaper elsewhere, whilst we take frequently articles from them of an inferior quality and at a dearer rate than we could purchase at from other countries. But what do the advocates of the present system say to the fact, that we are at this moment paying thirty per cent. more for the colonial productions consumed in our houses than is paid for similar articles, *procured from our own colonies, too*, by the people of the Continent? A workman in London, an artisan in Manchester, or a farmer of Wales, buys his Jamaica sugar and coffee thirty per cent. dearer than the native of Switzerland or America, perhaps five hundred miles distant from a port, and whose Governments never owned a colony! But, it will be said, this is necessary taxation to meet the interest of the debt. And what have we to show for the national debt but our colonies?

luxury, and degrade them, amidst their thousands of serfs, to the barbarous state of their ancestors of the ancient Rousniacs—and to confine her Czar in his splendid prison of Constantinople! \* If such are the miracles of the mind, such the superiority of improvement over the efforts of brute force and violence, is not the writer of these pages justified in calling the attention of his countrymen elsewhere,† to the progress of

\* The amount of our exports of cotton goods, of which industry Manchester is the centre, is double that of the exports of every kind from all the Russian empire; the shipping entering Liverpool annually exceeds the tonnage of St. Petersburg eightfold! These facts, which we can only thus allude to with epigrammatic brevity, convey forcibly to the reflecting mind an impression of the mighty influence which now slumbers in the possession of the commercial and manufacturing portions of the community; how little they understand the extent of their power may be acknowledged, when we recollect that this great and independent order of society (for the manufacturing interest of England is, from the nature of its position with reference to foreign states, more independent of British agriculture than the latter is of it), is deprived of the just reward of its ingenious labour by the tyranny of the corn-laws; that it possesses no representation, and consequently no direct influence, in *one* of the Houses of Parliament—the members of which, to a man, are interested in the manufacture and high price of food—and that it still lies under the stigma of feudal laws, that confer rights, privileges, and exemptions upon landed possessions, which are denied to personal property.

† Since the publication of “England, Ireland, and America,” the author has had an opportunity of visiting the United States, and of taking a hasty glance of the American people; and his ocular experience of the country has confirmed him in the views he put forth in that pamphlet. Looking to the natural endowments of the North American continent—as superior to Europe as the latter is to Africa—with an almost immeasurable extent of river navigation—its boundless expanse of the most fertile soil in the world, and its inexhaustible mines of coal, iron, lead, &c.—looking at these, and remembering the quality and position of a people universally instructed and perfectly free, and possessing, as a consequence of these, a new-born energy and vitality very far surpassing the character of any nation of the old world—the writer reiterates the moral of his former work, by declaring his conviction that it is from the west, rather than from the east, that danger to the supremacy of Great Britain is to be apprehended; that it is from the silent and peaceful rivalry of American commerce, the growth of its manufactures, its rapid progress in internal improvements, the superior education of its people, and their economical and pacific government—that it is from these, and not from the barbarous policy or the impoverishing armaments of Russia, that the grandeur of our commercial and national prosperity is endangered. *And the writer stakes his reputation upon*

another people, whose rapid adoption of the discoveries of the age, whose mechanical skill and unrivalled industry in all the arts of life—as exemplified in their thousands of miles of railroads, their hundreds of steamboats, their ship-building, manufacturing, patent inventions—whose system of universal instruction, and, above all, whose inveterate attachment to peace—all proclaim America, by her competition in improvements, to be destined to affect more vitally than Russia, by her aggrandisement of territory, the future interests of Great Britain?

If, then, England, by promoting the peaceful industry of her population, is pursuing a course which shall conduct her to a far higher point of moral and physical power than Russia can hope to reach by the opposite career of war and conquest, we must seek for some other motive than that of danger to ourselves, for the hostilities in which we are urged by so many writers and speakers, to engage with that northern people.

*the prediction, that, in less than twenty years, this will be the sentiment of the people of England generally; and that the same conviction will be forced upon the Government of the country.*

The writer has been surprised at the little knowledge that exists here with respect to the mineral resources of America. Few are aware that in nothing does that country surpass Europe so much as in its rich beds of coal. By a Government survey of the State of Pennsylvania, it appears that it contains twenty thousand square miles of coal, with iron in proportion. This in one State only! whilst the whole of the Mississippi valley is more or less enriched with this invaluable combustible. Several of his neighbours have been astonished by the inspection of a specimen of bituminous coal, which the writer procured from a pit at Brownsville, on the Monongahela river, above Pittsburg, and which is pronounced equal to the very best qualities produced from the mines in Yorkshire. The mode of working the pits is to drive an adit into the sloping banks of the navigable rivers, and, at a few yards distance, the coal stratum is usually found, six feet in thickness; and, as the miner is always enabled to work in an upright posture, one man will frequently produce as much as 100 loads a-day. The steamboat in which the author went from Brownsville to Pittsburg stopped at one of those pit's mouths, and took in a supply of fuel, which was charged at the rate of about three farthings a bushel. These are facts which bear more directly upon the future destinies of this country than the marriages of crowned heads in Portugal, the movements of savage forces in Russia, and similar proceedings, to which we attach so much importance.

The great grievance, indeed, with us, is one which, of all things born in remembrance, displays quite as much naïveté in the character of the British people as is consistent with a moderate share of self-knowledge. The Russians are accused by *us* of being an aggrandising people! From the day of Pultowa down to the time of the passage of the Balkan—say the orators, journalists, reviewers, and authors—the government of St. Petersburg has been incessantly addicted to picking and stealing. But, in the meantime, has England been idle? If, during the last century Russia has plundered Sweden, Poland, Turkey, and Persia, until she has grown unwieldy with the extent of her spoils, Great Britain has, in the same period, robbed—no, that would be an unpolite phrase—“*has enlarged the bounds of his Majesty’s dominions*” at the expense of France, Holland, and Spain. It would be false logic and just as unsound morality to allow the Muscovite to justify his derelictions of honesty by an appeal to our example; but surely we, who are staggering under the embarrassing weight of our colonies, with one foot upon the rock of Gibraltar and the other at the Cape of Good Hope—with Canada, Australia, and the peninsula of India, forming, Cerberus-like, the heads of our monstrous empire—and with the hundred minor acquisitions scattered so widely over the earth’s surface so as to present an unanswerable proof of our wholesome appetite for boundless dominion—surely *we* are not exactly the nation to preach homilies to other people in favour of the national observance of the eighth commandment!\* If *we* find all these possessions to be burden-

\* *Extract from Mr. T. Attwood’s speech, House of Commons, July 9, 1833.*—“The House will recollect that, for two centuries, Russia has been gradually encroaching upon the territories of all her neighbours; for the last 150 years her progress has been general on all sides—east, west, north, and south. A few years ago she attacked Sweden and seized upon Finland. Then she attacked Persia, and added some most important provinces to her empire in the south. Not content with this, she appropriated, in 1792, a great part of Poland; and it is but lately she has attacked Turkey. Thus, for years, she has gone on in her course of aggrandisement, in defiance of the laws of God and man!”—If for

some rather than profitable—if, in common with all marauders, *we* discover by experience that the acquisitions of fraud or violence confer nothing but disappointment and loss—we shall not improve our case by going to war to prevent Russia pursuing the same course, which will inevitably conduct her to a similar fate, where the same retribution, which will ever accompany an infringement of the moral laws, awaits her. England and Russia, in the act of scolding each other on the reciprocal accusation of unjust aggrandisement, present an appearance so ludicrous that it forcibly recalls to our recollection the quarrel between the two worthies of the Beggars' Opera, the termination of which scene we recommend to the imitation of the diplomatists of the two Courts. Like Locket and Peachum, the British lion and the Russian bear, instead of tearing one another, had better hug and be friends—"Brother *bruin*, brother *bruin*, we are both in the wrong."

Lord Dudley Stuart (whose zeal, we fear, without knowledge, upon the subject of Poland, and whose prejudice against Russia have led him to occupy so much of the public time uselessly upon the question before us), in the course of his long speech in the House of Commons (February 19th) upon introducing the subject of Russian encroachments, dwelt at considerable length upon the lust of aggrandisement by which he argued that the government of St. Petersburg was so peculiarly distinguished; and he brought forward, at considerable cost of labour, details of its successive conquests of territory during the last century. Where the human mind is swayed by any passion of however amiable a nature, or where the feelings are allowed to predominate over the reason, in investigating a subject which appeals only to the understanding,

Sweden, Persia, and Poland, we substitute France, Spain, and Holland, and if, instead of Turkey, we put the Burmese Empire, how admirably the above description would apply to another nation, of whose unprofitable aggrandisements in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America Mr. Attwood may read a few particulars in Mr. Montgomery Martin's "*History of the British Colonies*"—five volumes, octavo!

it will generally happen that the judgment is defective. We attribute to the well-known fervour of Lord Stuart's sentiments upon Russia and Poland, the circumstance that, during the fortnight which he must have employed in collecting the dates of the several treaties by which the former empire has wrested its possessions from neighbouring states, the thought never once occurred to him—a reflection which would have entered the head of almost any other man of sense, who sat down coolly to consider the subject—that, during the last hundred years, England has, for every square league of territory annexed to Russia, *by force, violence, or fraud, appropriated to herself three*. Such would have been the reflection which flashed across the mind of a statesman who sat down, *dispassionately*, to investigate the subject of Russian policy; and it must have prevented him by the consciousness of the egotism and arrogance—nay, the downright effrontery\* of such a course—from bringing an accusation against another people which recoils with threefold† criminality upon ourselves. Nor, if we were to enter upon a comparison of the cases, should we find that the *means* whereby Great Britain has augmented her possessions, are a whit less reprehensible than those which have been resorted to by the northern

\* We allude to the nation—the epithet cannot be applied to his lordship.

† We speak after due investigation and calculation, and not at random, when we allege that England has acquired three times as much territory as Russia during the last century. The Cape is computed at half a million of square miles, Canada at half as much more, India and New Holland will be found each with an area almost as large as that of the cultivable portion of Europe; not to mention other acquisitions too numerous to be described within the limits of a pamphlet!

Progressive augmentation of the Russian Empire :—

	Sq. miles.	Population.
At the accession of Peter I. . . . .	1689, 2,980,000	15,000,000
At his death . . . . .	1725, 3,150,000	20,000,000
At the accession of Catherine II. . . . .	1763, 3,700,000	25,000,000
At her death . . . . .	1796, 3,850,000	36,000,000
At the death of Alexander . . . . .	1825, 4,250,000	58,000,000

—*Malte-Brun's Geography*, vol. vi. p. 622.

power for a similar purpose. If the English writer calls down indignation upon the conquerors of the Ukraine, Finland, and the Crimea, may not Russian historians conjure up equally painful reminiscences upon the subjects of Gibraltar, the Cape, and Hindostan? Every one conversant with the history of the last century will remember that England has, during almost all that period, maintained an ascendancy at sea ; and colonies, which were in times past regarded as the chief source of our wealth and power, being pretty generally the fruits of every succeeding war, the nation fell into a passion for conquest, under the delusive impression that those distant dependencies were, in spite of the debt contracted in seizing them, profitable acquisitions to the mother country. Hence the British Government was always eager for hostilities the moment an excuse presented itself with one of the maritime continental states possessing colonies ; and of the several conflicts in which we have been involved since the peace of Ryswick, at least three out of four have been consequent upon declarations of war made by England.\* Russia, on the contrary, has been

\* The policy of England has been aggressive at all times ; but we are far from exulting in the fact of having always dealt the first blow, as Mr. Thomas Attwood, of Birmingham, would wish us to do, when he tells us, exultingly, in the House of Commons, whilst speaking of Russia—(*See Mirror of Parliament*, 1833, p. 2874),—"We, the people of England, who have never known what fear is ; who have been accustomed for seven hundred years to give a blow first, and to receive an apology afterwards ; we, who have borne the British lion triumphant through every quarter of the world, and are now forced to submit to insults from this base and brutal, and this in reality weak power—a power which, from its mere physical force, contrives, like a great bully, to intimidate the moral strength of Europe !" Now, putting aside the exquisitely ludicrous charge of bullying, alleged against Russia by one who boasts, that, for seven hundred years, *we* have "struck the first blow," and which reminds us of the scene between Sir Anthony Absolute and his "insolent, impudent, overbearing" son, Jack ; we have here a specimen of that sort of sentiment which horses or buffaloes, if they could make speeches, might very properly indulge in, but which is derogatory to the rank of reasoning beings, who possess intellectual faculties in lieu of hoofs and horns.

Mr. Attwood is an advocate for war and paper money—the curse and scourge of the working classes ! What do the Birmingham mechanics say to the follow-



nearly surrounded by the territory of barbarous nations, one of which \*—*by the very nature of its institutions warlike and aggressive*—was, up to the middle of the last century, prompted by a consciousness of strength, and, since then, by a haughty ignorance of its degeneracy, to court hostilities with its neighbours; and the consequence of this and other causes is, that, in the majority of cases, where Russia has been engaged in conflicts with her neighbours, she will be found to have had a war of self-defence for her justification. If such are the facts—if England has, for the sake of the spoil which would accrue to her superiority of naval strength, provoked war, with all its horrors, from weak and unwilling enemies, whilst Russia, on the contrary, with ill-defined boundaries, has been called upon to repel the attacks of fierce and lawless nations—surely, we must admit, unless pitiably blind by national vanity, that the gain (if such there be) resulting from these contentions, is not less unholy in the former than the latter case; and that the title by which the sovereign of St. Peters-

ing picture of the effects of the last war upon the prosperity of their town? The same results would follow a like cause, should a war be entered into, to gratify their favourite representative.

*Extract from Mr. Grey's (now Lord Grey) speech on the state of the nation, March 25, 1801.—See Hansard's Parliamentary History, vol. 35, p. 1064.*

"I come now to speak of the internal state of the country. Two hundred and seventy millions have been added to our national debt, exclusive of imperial and other loans, and of the reduction effected by the sinking fund; and yet we are told, by the ex-ministers, that they leave the country in a flourishing situation! I ask any man whether, from diminished comforts or from positive distress, he does not feel this declaration an insult. Ask the ruined manufacturers of Yorkshire, Manchester, and Birmingham; ask the starving inhabitants of London and Westminster. In some parts of Yorkshire, formerly the most flourishing, it appears, from an authentic paper which I hold in my hand, that the poor-rates have increased from £522 to £6,000 a year; though the whole rack-rent of the parish does not exceed £5,600. *In Birmingham, I know, from undoubted authority, there are near 11,000 persons who receive parochial relief, though the whole number of the inhabitants cannot exceed 80,000—and this of a town reckoned one of the most prosperous in England.*"

\* Turkey,



burg holds his conquered possessions is just as good, at least, as that by which the government of St. James's asserts the right to ours. In the case of Poland, to which we shall again have to recur by and by, there was, indeed, a better title than that of the sword, but which, amidst the clamour of fine sentiments, palmed by philanthropic authors and speakers upon the much abused public mind about Russian aggression in that quarter, has never, we believe, been mentioned by any orator, reviewer, or newspaper writer of the present day. The "Republic of Poland" (we quote the words of Malte-Brun) "had been chiefly composed of provinces wrested from Russia, or from the Great Dukes of Galitch, Vladimir, Volynski, Polotzk, and particularly Kiow by Boleslas the Victorious, Casimir the Great, Kings of Poland, and by Gedimir, Great Duke of Lithuania. Thus the nobles were the only persons interested in the defence of provinces whose inhabitants were estranged from the Poles, although they had remained under their government from the time of the conquest. All the peasants of Podolia and Volhynia were Rousniacs, or Little Russians, ignorant of the language or customs of Poland, which may partly account for the success of the Russians in their invasions of the Polish Republic. The Poles, who were persecuted by intolerant Catholic priests, who disregarded the constitutions of the Polish Diet, abandoned their lords without reluctance, and received willingly their countrymen, the Russian soldiers, who spoke the same dialect as themselves. The division of Poland was, on the part of Russia, not so much a lawless invasion as an act of reprisal on former invaders. Had this leading historical fact been explained in the Russian manifesto, which was published in 1772, so much obloquy might not have been attached to the conduct of that people."

Leaving, however, the question of title—which, whatever may be the conflicting opinions of moralists and legists, is, in the case of national tenures, usually decided according to the *power* of the possessor to hold in fee—we shall be next

reminded of the great benefits which British conquests have conferred upon remote and uncivilised nations, particularly in the example of India ; and we shall be called upon to show in what manner Russia has compensated for her violent seizures of independent territory, by any similar amelioration of the condition of its people. Before doing so, we shall premise that we do not offer it as a justification of the policy of Russia. If, by chance, the plunderer makes good use of his spoil, that is not a vindication of robbery ; and because the serf of Poland, the savage of Georgia, and the ryot of Bengal, enjoy better laws under the sway of Russia and Great Britain, than they formerly possessed beneath their own governments—to argue that, therefore, these two powers stand morally justified in having subjugated, with fire and sword, those three less civilised states, would be to contend that America, instead of contenting herself with imparting improvements to the unenlightened communities of Europe, by the peaceful but irresistible means of her high example, is warranted in invading Naples or Spain, for the purpose of rescuing their people from the thralldom of monarchy, or marching to Rome, and in place of the Pope, installing a President in the palace of the Vatican !\* It is, then, with no view to the justification of war and violence, but solely for the purpose of answering, by a few facts of unquestionable authenticity, those spurious appeals to our sympathies, based upon the false assumption of Russian aggrandisement, being but another term for the spread of barbarism and the extinction of freedom and civilisation, that

\* Yet there are perverse and purblind moralists, who can see proofs of God's interposition in every atrocious crime that happens, in its consequences, to carry some alloy of good ; which merely proves that the great Ruler of the universe has, in *spite* of us, set His fiat against the predominancy of evil. A clergyman, we believe Dr. Buchanan, of high attainments and strict evangelical doctrines, who passed many years in India, proposed a prize essay, on his return to England, *as to the probable designs of Providence in placing the Indian empire in the hands of Great Britain?* This, from a contemporary of Warren Hastings, is little less blasphemous than the *Te Deums* sung by Catherine for the victories of Ismail and Warsaw.

we glance at the proofs which are afforded in every direction of the vast moral, political, and commercial advantages that have been bestowed upon the countries annexed by conquest to that empire.

The writers who have attempted to lead public opinion upon the subject, have not scrupled to claim the interposition of our government with Russia, for the purpose of restoring to *freedom and independence* those Caucasian tribes to which we have before alluded, as having fallen under the partial dominion of Russia. Their previous state of freedom may be appreciated, when we recollect that, within our own time, a fierce war was waged between the most powerful of these nations\* and the Turks, in consequence of their having refused to continue to supply the harems of the latter with a customary annual tribute of the handsomest of their daughters ; offering, however, at the same time, in lieu, a yearly contribution in money. We have already alluded to the emancipating influence of Russian intervention over the commerce of the Black Sea, the only channel by which the civilising intercourse with commercial nations can extend to these unenlightened regions ; and we have been told, by the very highest authority,† that their trade, agriculture, and social improvement, already attest the beneficent effects of this improved policy. The following extract from a work ‡ of great and deserved reputation, gives the most recent information upon the countries under consideration ; and it conveys, perhaps, all that could be said upon the effects of Russian aggrandisement in these quarters :—“ The southern declivity of these mountains is highly fertile, abounding in forests and fountains, orchards, vineyards, corn fields, and pastures in rich variety. Grapes, chestnuts, figs, &c., grow spontaneously in these countries ; as well as grain of every description—rice, cotton, hemp, &c. But the inhabitants are barbarous and indolent.

\* The Georgians.      † M'Culloch—Commercial Dictionary, 7, p. 1108.

‡ Encyclopædia Britannica, new edition, now publishing, vol. 6, p. 250—art. Caucasus.

They consist of mountain tribes, remarkably ferocious, whose delight is in war, and with whom robbery is a hereditary trade ; and their practice is to descend from their fastnesses and to sweep everything away from the neighbouring plains—not only grain and cattle, but men, women, and children, who are carried into captivity. The names of the different tribes are, the Georgians, Abassians, Lesghians, Ossetes, Circassians, Taschkents, Khists, Ingooshes, Charabulaks, Tartars, Armenians, Jews, and in some parts wandering Arabs. They are mostly barbarous in their habits, and idolatrous in their religion, worshipping stars, mountains, rocks, and trees. There are among them Greek and Armenian Christians, Mahometans, and Jews. Several of the tribes, particularly the Circassians and Georgians, are accounted the handsomest people in the world ; and the females are much sought after by the eastern monarchs to be immured in their harems. The inhabitants amount to about 900,000, who are partly ruled by petty sovereigns, and partly by their seniors. The most famous are the Lesghians, who inhabit the eastern regions, and, living by plunder, are the terror of the Armenians, Persians, Turks, and Georgians. Their sole occupation is war, and their services can at any time be purchased by every prince in the neighbourhood, for a supply of provisions and a few silver roubles. *Since the extension of the Russian empire in this quarter, many of these mountain tribes have been restrained in their predatory habits. Under the iron rule of that powerful State, they have been taught to tremble and obey ; military posts have been dispersed over the country, fortresses have been erected, towns have arisen, and commerce and agriculture begin slowly to supplant the barbarous pursuits of war and plunder, in which these mountain tribes have been hitherto engaged.\** But the work of civilisation in these wild regions is

\* Yet the most active and persevering assailant of Russia, a writer to whom we alluded in the beginning of this pamphlet, does not scruple to invoke the aid of these hordes against their present rulers :—“The Georgian provinces would instantly throw off the yoke ; even the Wallachians, Moldavians, and

still slow ; it is difficult to reclaim the people from their long-settled habits of violence and disorder ; and it would not be safe for any traveller to pass alone through these countries, where he would be exposed to robbery and murder."

Another ground of ceaseless jealousy, on the part of our philo-Turkish and Russo-mania writers, has been discovered in the recent intervention of the Russian diplomatists in the affairs of Wallachia and Moldavia. The condition of these two Christian provinces, situated on the right bank of the Danube, and so frequently the scenes of desolating wars between Turkey and her neighbours, has been perhaps more pitiably deplorable than the lot of any other portion of this misgoverned empire. The hospodars or governors of Moldavia and Wallachia were changed every year at the will of the Sultan, and each brought a fresh retinue of greedy dependants, armed with absolute power, to prey upon the defenceless inhabitants. These appointments, as is the case now with every pachalick, were openly sold at Constantinople to the highest bidder ; and the hospodars were left to recover from their subjects the price of the purchase, to pay an annual tribute to the Porte, which was usually levied in kind, giving scope for the most arbitrary exactions ; and, besides, appease the favourites at court, who might otherwise intrigue against them. Need we be surprised that, under such a state of things, the population decreased, agriculture was neglected, and commerce and the arts of civilised existence were unknown in the finest countries of the world ? Not more than one-sixth\* part of the land of Wallachia is at present cultivated ; and Mr. Wilkinson, the late English consul, estimated that, without any extraordinary exertion, the existing population of Wallachia and Moldavia might, if property were

Bessarabians, would join in the general impulse ; the millions of brave and independent Circassians would pour across the Couban and spread over the Crimea—and where would Russia be ?"—See *Pamphlet*, " England, France, Russia, and Turkey."

\* The clergy, from being exempt from taxation, have become possessed of a third of the soil.

secured, raise twice the quantity of corn and double the number of cattle now produced in those provinces. The treaty of 1829, between Russia and Turkey, stipulates that the hospodars shall be elected for life, and that no tribute in kind shall be levied ; it also engages that a quarantine shall be placed on the Danube frontier, thus separating these provinces from the rest of Turkey. This case of intervention is appealed to as a proof of Russian ambition ; and Lord Stuart, in the course of his speech before alluded to, complains that, by this policy, its power is increased in those quarters. Admitting that Russia interferes in behalf of those unhappy countries with no loftier aim than the augmentation of her influence, and that the result will be the separation of the Christian provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia from the rest of the Turkish territory—nay, admitting that this should prove inimical to the interests of England (though the supposition is absurd enough, since whatever tends to advance the civilisation and augment the wealth of any part of the world must be beneficial in the end to us who are the greatest commercial and manufacturing people)—still the English nation would, we sincerely hope, feel a disinterested gratitude to the power which, by its merciful interposition, has rescued this suffering Christian community from the cruel, remorseless, and harassing grasp of its Mahometan oppressors.

Probably it will not be deemed necessary that we should trace the effects of Russian Government over the territories torn at different epochs from the Persian empire : if, however, we did not feel warranted in assuming that even those of our intelligent readers, who may be the most inimical to the power of the Czar, will readily admit the superiority of the organised despotism of St. Petersburg over the anarchic tyranny of Teheran, we should be prepared to afford proofs, from the works of travellers, themselves hostile to Russian interests, of the rapid ameliorations that have succeeded to the extension of this colossal empire in those regions. Still less shall we be

called upon to pause to point out the benefits that must ensue from the annexation of the Crimea to the dominions of the autocrat. Those wandering tribes of Crim Tartars, who exchanged, for the service of the Empress Catherine, the barbarous government of the descendants of Genghis Khan, and who received, as the first-fruits of a Christian administration, the freedom of the commerce of the world, by the opening of the navigation of the Black Sea, which immediately succeeded to the encroachments of Russia in that quarter, will gradually but, certainly, acquire the taste for trade; and, as population increases and towns arise, they will abandon, of necessity, their migratory habits, and become the denizens of civilised society.

We shall, for the sake of brevity, restrict ourselves to the following short passage, from the highest authority that can be consulted, upon the character of Russian policy towards her latest maritime acquisition on the side of the Baltic. "Finland," says Malte-Brun, "was averse to the union with Sweden, and has lost none of its privileges by being incorporated with Russia: it is still governed by Swedish laws; schools have been established during the last twenty years, and the peasantry are in every respect as well protected as in Sweden." \*

\* Vol. vi. p. 499, Malte-Brun's Geography.

# P O L A N D.

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## CHAPTER II.

### POLAND, RUSSIA, AND ENGLAND.

THE foregoing statements, with reference to portions of the Russian acquisitions, founded upon unquestionable authority, are calculated to awaken some doubts as to the genuineness of those writings and speeches, upon the faith of which we are called upon to subscribe to the orthodox belief in the *barbarising* tendency of all the encroachments of that country ; but these facts are unimportant, when we next have to refer to another of its conquests, and to bring before our readers Poland, upon which has been lavished more false sentiment, deluded sympathy, and amiable ignorance, than on any other subject of the present age. This is a topic, however, upon which it behoves us to enter with circumspection, since we shall have not only to encounter the prepossessions of the ardent and sincere devotee, but also to meet the uncandid weapons of bigotry and cant. Let us, therefore, as the only sure defence at all times against such antagonists, clothe our arguments from the armoury of reason in the panoply of truth. We will, moreover, reiterate, *for we will not be misunderstood*, that it is no part of our purpose to attempt to justify the conduct of the partitioning powers towards the Poles. On the contrary, we will join in the verdict of murder, robbery, treason, perjury, and baseness, which every free nation and all honest men must award to Russia, Prussia, and Austria, for their undissembled and unmitigated wickedness on that occasion ; nay, we will go further, and admit that all the infamy with which



Burke, Sheridan, and Fox laboured, by the force of eloquent genius, to overwhelm the emissaries of British violence in India, was justly earned, at the very same period, by the minions of Russian despotism in Poland. But our question is, not the conduct of the conquerors, but the present, as compared with the former condition of the conquered; the first is but an abstract and barren subject for the disquisition of the moralist; the latter appeals to our sympathies, because it is pregnant with the destinies of millions of our fellow creatures. Of how trifling consequence it must be to the practical minded and humane people of Great Britain, or to the world at large, whether Poland be governed by a king of this dynasty or of that—whether he be lineally descended from Boleslas the Great, or of the line of the Jagellons—contrasted with the importance of the inquiries as to the social and political condition of its people—whether they be as well or worse governed, clothed, fed, and lodged, in the present day as compared with any former period—whether the mass of the people be elevated in the scale of moral and religious beings—whether the country enjoys a smaller or larger amount of the blessings of peace; or whether the laws for the protection of life and property are more or less justly administered! These are the all-important inquiries about which we busy ourselves: and it is to cheat us of our stores of philanthropy, by an appeal to the sympathy with which we regard those vital interests of a whole people, that the declaimers and writers upon the subject, invariably appeal to us in behalf of the oppressed and enslaved *Polish nation*; carefully obscuring, amidst the cloud of epithets about “ancient freedom,” “national independence,” “glorious republic,” and such like, the fact that, previously to the dismemberment, the term *nation* implied only the nobles—that, down to the partition of their territory, about nineteen out of every twenty of the inhabitants were slaves, possessing no rights, civil or political—that about one in every twenty was a nobleman—and that this body of nobles formed the very worst aristocracy of ancient

or modern times ; putting up and pulling down their kings at pleasure ; passing selfish laws, which gave them the power of life and death over their serfs, whom they sold and bought like dogs or horses ; usurping to each of themselves the privileges of a petty sovereign, and denying to all besides the meanest rights of human beings ; and scorning all pursuits as degrading, except that of the sword, they engaged in incessant wars with neighbouring states, or they plunged their own country into all the horrors of anarchy, for the purpose of giving employment to themselves and their dependants.

In speaking of the Polish nation\* previously to the dismemberment of that country by Russia, Prussia, and Austria, we must not think of the *great mass of the people*, such as is implied by the use of that term with reference to the English or French nation of this day. The mass of the people were serfs, who had no legal protection and political rights—who enjoyed no power over property of any kind, and *who possessed less security of life and limb than has been lately extended to the cattle of this island by the act of Parliament against cruelty to animals!* The nobles, then, although they comprised but a mere fraction of the population, constituted the nation ; the rest of the inhabitants, the millions of serfs who tilled the soil, worked the mines, or did the menial labour of the grandees, were actually, in the eye of the law, of no more rank—nay, as we have shown, they were accounted less—than our horses, which, after the toil of the day, lie down in security under the protection of Mr. Martin's benevolent act ; whilst the slave of Poland possessed

\* "Never was this corruption of the state so fearful as here, *where the nobility constituted the nation* ; and where morals alone had made the want of a constitution less perceptible. Everything, therefore, deteriorated. The time for awakening from this lethargy could not but come ; but what a moment was it to be !"—*Heeren's Manual*, vol. i., p. 370. "By the constitution of 1791, which changed the government from an elective to a hereditary monarchy, all the privileged of the nobility were confirmed ; some favours, though very small, were accorded to the peasants ; these were slight, but more could not be granted *without irritating the former nation, the nobility.*"—*Heeren*, vol. ii., p. 231.

no such guarantee from the wanton cruelty of an arbitrary owner.

To form a correct estimate of the former condition of this country, it is not necessary to go back beyond the middle of the sixteenth century, previously to which the Poles, in common with the other northern states, were barbarians; and, if they attained to power, and exhibited some traits of rude splendour in their court and capital, they were merely results of incessant wars, which, of course, plunged the great mass of the people in deeper misery and degradation. At this early period of their country, we find them the most restless and warlike of the northern nations; and the Poles, who are now viewed only as a suffering and injured people, were, during the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, a most formidable and aggressive enemy to the neighbouring empires. They ravaged successively Russia, Prussia, Lithuania, Bohemia, and Hungary, and were, in turn, invaded by the Turks, Tartars, and Russians. They knew no other employment than that of the sword. War, devastation, and bloodshed were the only fashionable occupations for the nobility, whilst the peasants reaped the fruits of famine and slaughter. Yet the historian, whose volumes, perhaps, adorn the shelves of our colleges, and are deposited in the hands of the rising generation, points to the spectacle of intellectual and moral creatures grovelling in the abuse of a brute instinct shared equally by the shark and the tiger, and, pausing over the hideous annals of human slaughter, ejaculates—Glory!

At the death, in 1572, of Sigismund Augustus—the last of the Jagello race, in whose house the throne of Poland had been hereditary—a new constitution was framed by the nation (*that is, the nobles*), by which it was decreed that the monarchy should be elective, and the choice of the king was free and open to all the nation (*i.e. the nobles*). In this constitution—which was concocted for the exclusive benefit of the aristocracy, and did not even notice the existence of the great

mass of the wretched people, the slaves—it was agreed, amongst other enactments, that the nobles should pay no taxes; that they should have the power of life and death over their vassals; that all offices, civil, military, and ecclesiastical should belong to them; and that, in choosing whom they would for a king, they were privileged to lay him under what restrictions they pleased.

The mode of electing their kings, after the promulgation of this new constitution, was characteristic of the nation. About 150,000 to 200,000 nobles, being the electors, assembled together in a large plain. Those who possessed horses and arms were mounted and arranged in battle array in the front, whilst such as were poor, and consequently came on foot, and without regular arms, placed themselves, with scythes or clubs in their hands, in the rear rank. Our readers will readily believe that such an assembly as this, composed of warriors accustomed to violence, and with their arms at hand, would form a dangerous deliberative body, and unless actuated by the loftiest feelings of patriotism and virtue, it would degenerate into two armies of sanguinary combatants. But what could we expect from these elections when we know that from the death of Sigismund down to the time of the partition, Poland became one universal scene of corruption, faction, and confusion? The members of the diet—the nobles who had usurped the power of electing their king—were ready to sell themselves to the best bidder at the courts of Vienna, France, Saxony, Sweden, or Brandenburg; nay, in the words of the learned and philosophical historian,\* “A Polish royal election was henceforth nothing more than a double auction of the throne, partly in secret for the benefit of the voters, partly in public for the benefit of the state;” or, in the words of the same authority, when alluding elsewhere to the change in the constitution at the death of Sigismund—“A volcano, in a manner,

\* “Manual of the State Policy of Modern Europe,” by Professor Heeren, vol. i., p. 262.

burst forth in the midst of Europe, whose eruptions at almost every change of government threatened in turn every country far and near. Of the eleven kings of Poland, from Henry of Valois, 1572, to Stanislaus, 1764, hardly three were unanimously elected: foreign influence, and a wild spirit of faction, continued from first to last.”\* In lamentable truth, almost every election became the signal for a civil war, which usually lasted during the greater portion of the next reign; and thus, for the whole period from 1572 down to 1772, when the first partition was perpetrated by the three neighbouring powers, Poland was the constant scene of anarchy and its attendant miseries—fire, bloodshed, and famine. There is nothing in the history of the world comparable for confusion, suffering, and wickedness to the condition of this unhappy kingdom during these two centuries. “War, even in its mildest form, is a perpetual violation of every principle of religion and humanity.”† But foreign war is carried on with recognised laws for the mitigation of its evils, and under which the rights of person and property are, excepting in well understood cases, secured to the peaceable portions of communities. Should an invasion or a conquest take place, the army of the invader or conqueror is compelled, for self-defence, to preserve discipline, and to congregate as much as possible round one centre, by which the enemy’s country is preserved from the licentiousness of the victorious soldiers, and the more remote provinces almost entirely escape the miseries of war. Besides, it becomes immediately the policy and the interest of the victor to restore the newly acquired territory to its former condition of quietness and prosperity, and with this view laws for the protection of the inhabitants are generally enforced. But civil war, or intestine war, as we prefer to call it, allows of none of these palliations. It spreads throughout the entire length and breadth of a country, and devastates alike every section of the community, leaving no spot where the olive of peace may flourish and

\* Heeren, vol. i., pp. 191 and 192.

† Gibbon.

afford shelter to the innocent, and sparing no city which shall serve for a refuge to the timid. It desolates villages and farms, as well as towns and capitals, carries the spirit of deadly animosity into every relation of life, setting neighbours against neighbours, servants against masters, and converting friends into foes. Nay, it penetrates into the sacred precincts of domestic life, and often infuses a Cain-like hatred into the hearts of brethren of the same womb. Such is intestine war, which owns no law and permits no neutrality. And, in the midst of this description of warfare, Poland groaned and bled, with scarcely the slightest intermission, from 1572 down to 1772.

Many of those who will read this pamphlet have not the means or the leisure to investigate, as they otherwise ought undoubtedly to do, the history of the government ignorantly or mischievously praised by some of our writers and speakers, under the name of the *republic* of Poland. Instead of such a government as we now understand in speaking of the American republics, it was a despotism one hundred thousand times worse than that of Turkey at this time, because it gave to 100,000 tyrants absolute power over the lives of the rest of the community. The annals of republican Poland, previously to its dismemberment are nothing but a history of anarchy; and such is the title actually given to a work\* that is only a horrible catalogue of tragedies, in which the nobles are the actors; who crowd the scenes with murders, fires, torturings, and famines, until the heart sickens with horror at the frightful spectacle. For nearly the whole of the century immediately preceding the downfall of Poland, religious discord was added to the other incalculable miseries of this country, owing to the rise of sects of dissenters from the prevailing religion. Devastated by foreign and civil wars, and by famine

\* "Histoire de l'Anarchie de Pologne et du Démembrement de cette République." Par C. Ruhlière. Paris: 1807. 4 vols. 8vo. The History of the Anarchy of Poland, in four volumes octavo!

and the plague, that followed in their train, the exhaustion of peace itself now served but to develop new miseries.\* Fanaticism and bigotry armed themselves with the sword, as soon as it was abandoned by the worshippers of Mars; and they waged a warfare against the souls and bodies of their enemies with a fury that knew no bounds; dealing out anathemas over wretches expiring at the stake, pulling down churches, and even tearing up the graves of the dead! The historian who recounts the calamities that were showered upon the unhappy millions, the slaves, during this career of rapine and sacrilege, exclaims—"Oh! that some strong despot would come, and in mercy rescue these people from themselves!"

The intrigues of Russia did not at first promote the growth of this terrible disorder, as might be objected by some of our readers. That power was itself struggling against powerful enemies, and contending with the difficulties of internal reforms, down to within half a century of the period when the partition of Poland took place. Those wise reforms † that gave to Russia, from the hands of Peter the Great, the seeds of a power which has since grown to such greatness, and which, if adopted by Poland, would have in all probability conducted her to a similar state of prosperity, were absolutely rejected by the profligate nobles, because they must necessarily have involved some amelioration of the fate of the people.

The picture we have drawn of Polish wickedness and corruption is not too highly coloured, or if so, it is not by us: we have given the names and works of the authors from whom we derive our information, and we appeal to them as the highest authorities in the literature of Europe. What have been the retributive consequences to empires, in all ages, of such a

\* "The flame of religious discord was now added, and the Jesuits took care that the fire should not be extinguished."—*Heeren*, vol. i. p. 334.

† "The nation (*the nobles*) carefully guarded against any reforms, such as was a thing place in Russia."—*Heeren*, vol. i. p. 328.

career of internal contention and profligacy as we have just described? What was the just fate of Persia, Greece, and Rome, after they had filled up the measure of their degeneracy? When the oak is decayed at its heart the tree yields to the wind and falls prostrate to the earth; a ship that is rotten no longer resists the pressure of surrounding water, and she disappears from the face of the ocean; if, in constructing a bridge, the foundation of the piers be despised and neglected, the entire edifice, superstructure and all, is overwhelmed in the stream. And knowing that the immutable laws of nature govern equally the destinies of animated existence, shall we marvel to find that an empire which had for two hundred years been decaying to its very centre, whilst its boundaries presented no bulwark against the influx of raging enemies, which had all that time exhibited the nobility wallowing in licentiousness, and the labouring population, that ought to be the foundation and support of a country, insolently despised and trampled under foot? ought we to wonder that such an empire at length reaped the sad harvest of its iniquities, and was prostrated or swallowed up by the force of surrounding nations? The fate of Poland was but a triumph of justice, without which its history would have conveyed no moral for the benefit of posterity. The annals of the world do not exhibit an example of a great nation—such, for instance, as Prussia, united, well governed, rising in intelligence, morals, and religion, and advancing in wealth and civilisation—falling beneath the destroying hand of a conqueror. Such a catastrophe is reserved for the chastisement of the self-abandoned, depraved, disorganised, ignorant, and irreligious communities, and their anarchical governments—for Babylon and Persepolis—for Poland and Turkey! But though the punishment was a righteous infliction we need not vindicate the executioners. The murderer's sentence is just; but we are not therefore bound to tolerate the hangman.

But we have yet to show, in the case of Poland, that the



rod of affliction is administered by the great Ruler of the universe, in a spirit not of vengeance, but of mercy. We are now to prove—and without claiming for the instruments of the amelioration the merit of designing such happy results, or presuming to say that the same or better effects might not have followed from more righteous causes—that the dismemberment of that empire has been followed by an increase in the amount of peace, wealth, liberty, civilisation, and happiness, enjoyed by the great mass of the people. We shall not touch upon the fate of those portions of the Polish territory which, at the partition, fell to the spoil of Austria and Prussia, further than to observe that the present condition of their inhabitants, particularly of those of the latter, is, when contrasted with that of any former era of their history, only to be compared to the state of the blessed in the Elysian regions, as opposed to the sufferings of Pandemonium.

Our business, however, lies with that portion of the (*mis-called*) Republic which fell to the share of Russia; and we shall, in the first place, allude to the present state of that section of the inhabitants which, from being by far the most numerous, ought, upon the soundest principle of justice, to attract the primary notice of the inquirer. Slavery no more exists in Poland; the peasant that tills the soil no longer ranks on a level with the oxen that draw his plough; he can neither be murdered nor maimed at the caprice of an insolent owner, but is as safe in life and limb, under the present laws of Poland, as are the labourers of Sussex or Kent. The modern husbandman is not restricted to mere personal freedom; he enjoys the right to possess property of all kinds—not even excepting land,\* against which the nobles of ancient *republican* Poland opposed insuperable prohibitions. In a word, the peasantry of Poland now possess the control over their own

\* "The whole of the lands are now alienable, and may be purchased by the peasants, and all other classes, except the Jews."—*Jacob's Report to the Lords*, 1826, p. 66.—This is the shameful exception in England!

persons and fortunes, and are at liberty to pursue happiness \* according to their own free will and pleasure ; which, after all that can be said for one Government in preference to another, is nearly the amount of freedom that can be *felt* to be possessed by the great mass of any nation. Let it not be supposed that we wish to convey the impression that the labouring classes of the country under notice are elevated to an equality with the mechanics or husbandmen of England and America ; from the very nature of circumstances, and from no one more than our iniquitous corn-laws—which have often starved our artisans in the midst of idle looms, and, at the same time, doomed the ploughman of Poland to nakedness or sheep-skins, whilst surrounded by granaries bursting with the best corn in the world, such an equality is, in our day, impossible. But to show, in as few words as possible, what were the natural fruits, after fifteen years of peace and comparative good government, to a country that had, for two centuries, witnessed only the growth of discord, insecurity, and famine, let us quote from a volume† which bears intrinsic evidence of containing an authentic and candid compendium of the history of Poland :—

“The condition of the country had continued to improve beyond all precedent ; at no former period of her history was the public wealth so great or so generally diffused. Bridges and public roads, constructed at an enormous expense, frequently at the cost of the Czar’s treasury ; the multitude of new habitations, remarkable for a neatness and a regard to domestic comfort never before observed ; the embellishments introduced into the buildings, not merely of the rich, but of tradesmen and mechanics ; the encouragement afforded, and eagerly afforded, by the Government, to every useful

\* “Some rare instances of perseverance, industry, and temperance, are to be found ; and, unfavourable as their circumstances may be for the creation of such habits, they are here attended by the usual correspondent results. Some few peasants have been enabled to purchase estates for themselves.”—*Jacob’s Report*, p. 66.

† Cabinet Cyclopædia—History of Poland, p. 269.

branch of industry ; the progress made by agriculture in particular, the foundation of Polish prosperity ; the accumulation, on all sides, of national and individual wealth ; and, above all, the happy countenances of the inferior classes of society—exhibited a wonderful contrast to what had lately been. The most immense of markets, Russia—a market all but closed to the rest of Europe—afforded constant activity to the manufacturer. To prove this astonishing progress from deplorable, hopeless poverty to successful enterprise, let one fact suffice. In 1815 there were scarcely one hundred looms for coarse woollen cloths ; at the commencement of the insurrection of 1830 there were six thousand.” \*

But it will very naturally and properly be inquired—“ How did it happen that the nation revolted against Russia in 1830, if the people enjoyed so much benefit from the connection with that empire ? ” We have thus far spoken only of the condition of the mass of the people ; to answer this objection, it will be necessary to refer to another class, whose interests had always been opposed to the happiness and liberty of the population at large. From the moment when Poland was constituted a kingdom, at the treaty of Vienna, and made an appendage to the Russian crown, the nobles never ceased to sigh for their ancient liberty (*license*) of electing a king—*i.e.* of periodically selling themselves, by a “ double auction,” as Heeren asserts, to the highest bidder. They sighed also for those times when there was no law to protect the weak from their outrages, and when a reign of violence and disorder gave them perpetual occasions of making war upon each other, and of ravaging the

\* “ Wherever Russia extended her sovereignty, there prevailed overwhelming tyranny, grinding oppression, unblushing venality, odious corruption, treacherous espionages, spoliation, moral degradation, and slavery. (Hear, hear.) What good did Russia ever accomplish ? It was said that she might civilise the barbarian Turks ; he believed they would hear no more about that after the conduct of Russia towards Poland. *The Poles did not, as the House well knew, rise until goaded into madness by a series of oppressions before unheard of ; the country was watered by the tears of its inhabitants.* ”—Lord Dudley Stuart’s *Speech, House of Commons, Feb. 19, 1836.*

unprotected provinces. The laws which were passed for the defence of the lives and properties of the peasants were regarded with jealousy \* by the nobles, who viewed such enactments in the light of encroachments upon their privileges ; and they looked back to the days when they alone constituted the *nation*, and all besides were but as the brutes of the field. It was not merely indirectly, however, that the privileges of the aristocracy were curtailed, one of the first acts of the Emperor Alexander being to restrict the use of titles to the possessors of property in that country where, *previously, the rank had descended to every son,† and continued to all their successors*, thus multiplying titles indefinitely, and adding a thousandfold to the mischiefs of conferring absolute power on a particular class, by suffering it to be frequently possessed by desperadoes or paupers. But the cause that, more than all others, had contributed to render the nobles discontented, was the long-protracted peace, which deprived them of their accustomed occupation and revenue ; and which, however much it contributed to the happiness of the industrious agriculturists and traders, brought nothing but ruin and discontent to a body that retained too much of the pride and turbulence of character inherited from their warlike ancestors, to dream of descending to pursuits of a commercial or peaceful character. To present a clear view of the state of this *order* of society in Poland, we will extract a few lines upon the subject from the work of Mr. Jacob, before quoted. It will place his authority beyond question, if we remind our readers that he is the gentleman who was selected, by a Parliamentary Committee, to make a journey through the northern portions of Europe, for the purpose of making to his employers a report of the corn trade of those regions. This individual—who was, of course, not only selected for his efficient powers of observation, but also for his character for honour and fidelity—in speaking, incidentally, of the state

\* Heeren, vol. ii. p. 231.

† Jacob's Report, p. 60.

of society of Russian Poland, in his official report, makes this observation upon the Polish gentry :—"The Polish gentry are too proud to follow any course but the military career ; and the Government, by its large standing army, encourages the feeling, though the pay is scarcely sufficient to supply the officers with their expensive uniforms. Whatever difficulties may present themselves to the placing out young men of good family, none have had recourse to commerce ; and if they had, such would be treated by others as having lost their caste, and descended to a lower rank of society. The consequence is, that all the trade and manufactures of the country are in the hands of the Germans or the Jews. The former seek to return home with the fortunes they make—the latter do not possess the full rights of citizenship and cannot be expected to take great interest in the prosperity of the country."

The above account of the tone of feeling, and of the condition of the aristocratic party of Poland, written in 1825, accounts for the insurrection breaking out in 1830, when every other class of its inhabitants was in the enjoyment of unprecedented happiness and prosperity. *And we hesitate not emphatically to assert, that it was wholly, and solely, and exclusively, at the instigation, and for the selfish benefit, of this aristocratic fraction of the people, that the Polish nation suffered for twelve months the horrors of civil war, was thrown back in her career of improvement, and has since had to endure the rigours of a conqueror's vengeance.\** The Russian government was aware of this ; and its severity has since been chiefly directed towards the nobility.†

\* The peasants joined, to a considerable extent, the standard of revolt ; but this was to be expected in consequence of the influence necessarily exercised over them by the superior classes. Besides, patriotism or nationality is an instinctive virtue, that sometimes burns the brightest in the rudest and least reasoning minds ; and its manifestation bears no proportion to the value of the possessions defended, or the object to be gained. The Russian serfs at Borodino, the Turkish slaves at Ismail, and the lazzaroni of Naples, fought for their masters and oppressors more obstinately than the free citizens of Paris or Washington did, at a subsequent period, in defence of those capitals.

† We cannot help alluding to the unfortunate natives of this country who are

In the ukase of the 9th (21st) November, 1831, directing that five thousand Poles should be transported into the interior of the empire, it is expressly provided that they be selected from the disaffected of the *order of the gentry*. And, in the order issued to the Russian troops employed to quell the insurrection, they are required, under severe penalties, to respect the houses and property of the Polish peasants.

Now, we put it frankly to such of our readers as do not enjoy the leisure, or perhaps possess the taste for informing themselves of the subject in hand, excepting through the periodical press and the orations of public speakers, whether we were not justified in asserting that they have been cheated of their stores of compassion, by those who call forth public sympathy for the oppressed Polish people, by appealing to their former liberty, when the mass of the nation was in slavery; by deploring the tyranny of the Russian government, which has served to give security and protection to the great body of the poor, against the oppressions of the powerful nobles; by lauding the ancient prosperity, wealth, grandeur, and happiness of a country which, until the present age, was, at no period of its history, for fifteen successive years, exempt from civil or foreign war—from desolation, the plague, or famine;\* and by implor-

now seeking an asylum in England, and who belong entirely, we believe, to the class here referred to. Our allusion is to the system which sacrificed millions to hundreds of thousands, and not to persons, or even to generations of persons. Above all, we would except the unfortunate stranger that is now within our gates, imploring our help in a season of distress. In throwing himself upon our shores, the unhappy Pole evinced his generous belief that we would protect and succour him, and he will not discover that we want the power or the will to do either; nor will we wait to inquire whether he be peer or peasant. The bird that, to escape from the tyrant of the skies, flies trembling to the traveller's bosom is secure; base, indeed, would he be first to examine if his fluttering guest were a dove or a hawk. We cannot, however, approve of the lectures upon Polish history and literature, which have been delivered, in many parts of the kingdom, by some of these refugees. They convey erroneous pictures of the former condition of that country; glossing over the conduct of the nobles, and suppressing all mention of the miserable state of the serfs.

\* See Appendix for extracts from history of Poland.

ing the Powers to restore the Polish nation to its condition previously to the first partition in 1772, which would be to plunge nineteen-twentieths of the inhabitants from freedom into bondage, from comparative happiness into the profoundest state of misery? But worse effects than the waste of a little misdirected philanthropy follow from these misrepresentations. The British indignation and hatred towards Russia\* have been awakened, and those fierce passions have taken possession of the public mind throughout the kingdom so strongly as to place us in that most dangerous of all predicaments, where the majority is sufficiently excited, by national prejudice, to be brought within view of the hostile precipice, and only requires a further stimulus to plunge the country into the horrible gulf of war. And who and what are the writers and speakers that have made the subject of Poland the vehicle for conducting public opinion to the verge of such a catastrophe? Are they cognizant, or are they unaware of the merits of the question which we have now been faithfully discussing? In either case, out upon such quackery! The empiric who, under pretence of healing their bodily disorders, fires the blood or deranges the bowels of his patients, suffers the penalty of homicide for the death of his victim, without inquiry whether the destructive nostrum was ignorantly or knowingly administered. And how long shall political quacks be permitted, without fear of punishment, and with no better justification than the plea of ignorance, to inflame the minds and disorder the understandings of a whole

\* The terms of abuse showered upon Nicholas in the British legislature are new in taste; and, we think, when applied to a potentate at peace with us, such epithets as monster, Herod, miscreant, &c., are not improvements upon the terms that we find in the earlier volumes of Hansard. In any case, would such language be honourable to the Parliament? Supposing a war should follow, is it dignified to precede hostilities with vituperative missiles? Spring and Langan set to with a better grace, by shaking hands at the scratch: the rules of the Fives-court had better be transcribed for the benefit of St. Stephen's. We are told, indeed, that it is a just manifestation of public opinion. We have heard similar expressions of opinion at Billingsgate and Clare Market, and have observed that they sometimes lead to blows, *but never to conviction.*



nation, by stimulating them to a frenzy of hatred towards a people more than a thousand miles distant, and preparing them for probably millions of murders, by administering unchecked, their decoction of lies, their compounds of invention and imposture, or their deadly doses of poisoned prejudice, gilded with spurious philanthropy?

We have thus (in allusion to the objections of those who take exceptions to Russian aggrandizement upon the ground that the encroachments of that power are always accompanied by the infliction of barbarous oppressions upon the conquered nations) shown that in all cases where neighbouring states have been annexed to that empire, the inhabitants have thereby been advanced in civilisation and happiness. We have in the case of Poland, which has undoubtedly benefited more than any other country by its incorporation with Russia, dwelt at greater length upon this point, both because we believe that the impression above referred to is all but universal in reference to this people, and because we are convinced that from this erroneous idea originates nearly all the hostility which, in just and generous minds—and they are the great majority—is entertained towards the Russian government and people.

In examining the various grounds upon which those who discuss the subject take up their hostile attitudes towards the Russian nation, we have—with infinite surprise and a deep conviction of the truth that a century of aristocratic government and consequent foreign interference have impregnated all classes with the haughty and arrogant spirit of their rulers—discovered that Great Britain has been argued into a warlike disposition against that remote empire, without one assignable motive or grievance which could have even engendered a tone of resentment from our public writers and speakers, had they been actuated only by the principles of common sense, modest forbearance, and a regard for the benefit of the people. We have sought in vain for cases of insult to *our* flag; for an example of spoliation committed upon *English* merchants; for



the appearance of hostile fleets in British waters threatening our shores ; for the denial of redress for injuries inflicted ; for the refusal to liquidate some just debt. We have sought for such wrongs as these at the hands of the Russian Government to justify an appeal to menaces and a call for armaments from our Russo-maniac orators and writers ; but we find only charges of spoliation of Turkish territory, assaults upon Poland, intrigues with Persia, designs upon Sweden, and conquests in Georgia—affairs with which we have less interest in embroiling ourselves than we have with the struggle now raging in the province of Texas between the Americans and Mexicans.

If we refer to the speech of Lord Dudley Stuart, before alluded to (which is a compendium of all the accusations, suppositions, fears, dangers, and suspicions of which the subject is susceptible), we shall find an alarming picture given of the future growth of Russian dominion. Turkey, it seems, is to be only the germ of an empire which shall extend not merely from “Indus to the Pole,” but throw forth its arms over Europe and Asia, and embrace every people and nation between the Bay of Bengal and the English Channel ! Turkey once possessed, and the devouring process begins. Austria and all Italy are to be swallowed up at a meal, Greece and the Ionian Islands serving for side-dishes. Spain and Portugal follow as a dessert for this Dando of Constantinople ; and Louis Philippe and his empire are washed down afterwards with Bordeaux and Champagne. Prussia and the smaller German States, having wisely formed themselves into a trades union of some thirty or forty millions, might be supposed by some persons to be secure from this tyrannical master. Nothing of the kind ! His lordship has discovered that this is a mere trick of Russia for making them a richer prey. The German goose is only penned in this Prussian league that it may fatten and be worthier of the fate that awaits it. When Michaelmas arrives it will be served up in due state to the Russian eagle. Belgium, Sweden, Denmark, and Holland are

to be but as *entremets* for this national repast. And Persia, Egypt, Arabia, and India, in one large bouquet, will furnish the exotics to perfume and adorn this banquet of empires !\* One trifling matter, however, Lord Stuart altogether forgets to take into account : he omits to say how all the viands shall be paid for ; in other words, in what way the Russian Chancellor of the Exchequer will make good his budget when called upon to clothe, feed, and pay armies to conquer a dozen powerful nations, some of them richer than the conqueror ; to meet the expenses of *materiel* to furnish the commissariat, hire baggage waggons, charter transports, and to cover the thousand other outgoings, including even the frauds and impositions incidental

\* " Russia, as honourable members must be well aware, was not at the least pains to disguise her dissatisfaction at the present state of affairs in the Peninsula ; and with a frontier so far advanced as hers now was, could any man living doubt that she would very soon adopt plain modes of making that dissatisfaction felt ? He repeated that, with a frontier so far advanced, Italy was not safe from her grasp, and Russia once established there the consequences to Austria must be tremendous. Russia was surrounding—was enveloping Austria. Turkey would soon fall a prey to her lust of extended dominion. Greece would be a mere province of Russia ; indeed, already Greece was subjected to her influence, and she scarcely hesitated to menace France. . . . He would again say that the whole of the Prussian league was at the instigation of Russia, the former being the mere creature of the latter. When the present designs of Russia were accomplished, they would soon see how she was becoming jealous of Prussia, and a pretext would not be long wanting for the destruction of that instrument which the great northern power had used in erecting and confirming its own ascendancy. Prussia was prepared to do everything which Russia might dictate for the purpose of forwarding her designs ; but she might fully anticipate this—that as soon as the plans of the Autocrat were matured, he would *in a day* (!) dismember and pull down his present allies, and after that Austria could not long resist. Then in another quarter of her great empire, let them only look at the advantages possessed by Russia. She had military stations within thirty miles of the western coast of Norway. . . . That country could furnish sailors inferior to none in the world, and the whole kingdom abounded with timber of the best quality. *Russia would then become a naval power of the first order* (!) and might be joined by the Americans or the Dutch to the manifest disadvantage of England." (!!)—*Times' report of Lord Dudley Stuart's Speech, Feb. 19, 1836.*

These sentiments appear to have been delivered with gravity, and listened to by the House of Commons without a smile !

to a state of warfare. His lordship forgets this, and in doing so calls to our recollection a dream—our readers have probably experienced something of the kind—in which we found ourselves buoyed up in the air and borne along we could not tell how. It was not walking, flying, or swimming; yet on we glided through space, quite independent of all the laws of nature—hills disappearing, rivers drying up, seas changing into terra firma, trees, walls, and castles vanishing at our approach; despising all the usual impediments of sublunary travelling, caring no more for inns than if we had been a shooting star, and regardless, like Halley's comet, of a change of horses. On we went, with no luggage to look after, or hotel bills to settle, or postillions to pay, till, alas! we awoke and discovered that we were only a mortal biped, trammelled by the law of gravitation, and enslaved by the rules of political economy, privileged but to travel along coarse, dirty roads, and compelled before starting, not only to calculate the cost of the journey, but to put the money in our purse for coaches, steamboats, turnpike gates, and inns, as well as their waiters, boots, porters, and chambermaids, besides a round sum to cover extortions, if we would keep our temper. Now, Lord Stuart's case was precisely similar to ours, with the exception that he did not wake to his vision of supernatural locomotion. But to be serious. To those who resort, as a crowning bugbear, to the threats of universal sovereignty as the ultimate aim of the Russian Government, we have already in some degree replied by showing the weakness of that empire, as exemplified in its uncultivated surface, in the scattered position of its uncivilised people—their poverty, ignorance, and diversified character—and in the circumstance of its being behind Great Britain and other countries in the march of improvement and discovery.

But we can appeal to other facts, and to experience, to disprove the exaggerated views that are put forth respecting the power of Russia; and in no instance were her weakness and inability to concentrate and support an army more fully illus-

trated than at the invasion of her territory by Bonaparte. At the battle of Borodino—which was the first great affair that took place between the French and the forces of the Czar—we find, notwithstanding the alarm of invasion had been trumpeted through Europe eighteen months previously, that the number of combatants brought, on that bloody day, to the defence of their native soil, only amounted to 120,000 men, of whom a large portion were without uniforms or arms, excepting scythes or other similar weapons. Now, to illustrate the very superior strength of a nation whose inhabitants are at once concentrated and rich, let us suppose so absurd a circumstance as that Russia, after eighteen months of open preparation and threatening, were to march an army of nearly half a million of soldiers into England; should we be found, after so ample a warning, opposing only 120,000 fighting men, and that number only half armed and clothed, in defence of our homes, our wives and daughters, in the first battle-field? London alone could furnish and equip such an army, in so great a cause, within six months! Nor did the deficiency of numbers arise from want of patriotism. On the contrary, the Russians fought with unequalled ardour and bravery;\* and the only reason that Napoleon's troops were not on that occasion overwhelmed by ten times their force, is, that the Government had not money to pay for transporting its subjects from remote provinces to the scene of action, or funds to provide arms and support them when collected together.

It has been well observed by a very sound authority,† that China affords the best answer to those who argue that Russia meditates hostile views towards our Indian possessions. China is separated from Russia by an imaginary boundary only; and

\* Regiments of peasants, who till that day had never seen war, and who still had no other uniform than their grey jackets, formed with the steadiness of veterans, crossed their brows, and having uttered their national exclamation, "*Gospodee pomiloui nas!*"—God have mercy upon us!—rushed into the thickest of the battle.—*Scott's Napoleon*, chap. 77.

† *Spectator* newspaper, No. 386.

that country is universally supposed to contain a vast deposit of riches, well worthy of the spoiler's notice. Besides, it has not enjoyed the "*benefit*" of being civilised by English or other Christian conquerors—an additional reason for expecting to find a wealthy pagan community, waiting, like unwrought mines, the labours of some Russian Warren Hastings. Why, then, does not the Czar invade the Chinese empire,\* which is his next neighbour, and contains an unravaged soil, rather than contemplate, as the alarmist writers and speakers predict he does, marching three thousand miles over regions of burning deserts and ranges of snowy mountains, to Hindostan, *where he would find that Clive and Wellesley had preceded him?* The reason for such forbearance is, at the present day, as it was when that splendid but immoral genius, Catherine, proposed to undertake this very expedition—that *there was not in Russia sufficient available wealth to transport across its own surface an army large enough to subjugate the Chinese.* How, then, will they reach India through enemies' territories, and in spite of the power and influence of England? To warrant the attempt, the Czar ought to possess, at least, the command of one hundred millions sterling. Last year, he required but one million and a quarter,† for which he was compelled to solicit the aid of the capitalists of western Europe, and found great

\* Unless his Muscovite Majesty should adopt this suggestion quickly, there appears some chance that England may be before him at Peking. We perceive that some of our writers are anxious that we should send some ships of war to compel the Chinese Government to open other ports to our vessels besides Canton, and to dictate certain other regulations for carrying on trade with us, which they are good enough to suggest to his Celestial Majesty. Could not our ships of war call in on the way, and compel the French people to transfer the trade of Marseilles to Havre, and thus save us the carriage of their wines and madders through the Straits of Gibraltar? Why should not they force the Americans to restrict the export of their cotton to New York, rather than to suffer the growth of Savannah and Mobile? Well may the Chinese proclaim us "*outside barbarians*;" for, verily, this is outside barbarous morality!

† Double the amount might be raised without difficulty, upon sufficient security, in Manchester, in less than forty-eight hours, if the profit or other motive offered an adequate inducement.

difficulty, even after pledges of peace and protestations of good behaviour, in obtaining the necessary loan!

“Russia once in possession of Constantinople, and farewell to the liberties of Europe!” is the cry of those who are “*possessed*” with the dread of Muscovite ambition; and the very repetition of this prophecy is calculated to produce believers in its truth. *How* it is that Russia is to conquer one hundred millions of people, superior to her own population in wealth, freedom, instruction, and morality, and armed with all the superiority of power which an ascendancy in those qualities ever has, and always will bestow upon civilised communities over barbarous nations, not one of those writers and speakers has condescended to explain; the ways and means are studiously avoided, or disregarded as of no consequence. Yet that Russia possesses no superhuman properties, which enable her to disregard the ordinary impediments of nature, we have already shown, in the example of her inability, when attacked, to resist the invader, owing to the want of the money, food, arms, and clothing, necessary for the transport and maintenance of large armies. With such an example of her weakness in defensive operations as we have just given, we need not be surprised that we have very abundant proofs of the feebleness of that empire when engaged in aggressive warfare. All the hostilities carried on between Russia and her barbarous neighbours, Turkey and Persia, have been full of evidences of the difficulty with which the first Power achieved her successive conquests, and the precarious tenure by which she has held them. Indeed, the last war with Turkey was, from the combined causes of deficient means of transport, defective commissariat supplies, and want of hospitals—all arising from the poverty of the Government—protracted so long and attended with so great a loss of life to the invaders, that it left no doubt, with reflecting minds, of the incompetency of Russia to sustain a war of aggression with Prussia, Austria, or any other civilised State.

But Poland is the best and latest witness of the weakness and poverty of Russia. Notwithstanding that the insurrection in that country broke out at a moment when the preparations were not matured (owing to the rashness of the military youths of Warsaw), and although the natives possessed no strong places, as in Belgium, and their territory is destitute of mountain fastnesses, such as are found in Spain, Scotland, or Switzerland, yet a mere handful of insurgents baffled the whole power of the Czar for twelve months, several times defeating his ill-equipped armies with great slaughter, and at last were subdued only through the perfidy of the Prussian authorities. Surely with this experience of Russian weakness and poverty to appeal to, we need not refer to the dangers apprehended for France, Germany, and Spain, unless it be to ask whether a British Parliament, possessing so many unsatisfied claims upon its time and attention at home, from two millions of paupers in a neighbouring island, declared by authority to be without the means of subsistence; from the Dissenters of this kingdom and the Catholics of Ireland; and from the discontented taxpayers at large, whether the British legislature might not very properly leave the care of those independent and powerful empires to their own governments, at least for the present, until the business of the united empire shall have been more satisfactorily dispatched.

We shall, however, be told that in arguing for the weakness of this empire from past experience, we lose sight of the difference between Russia in the Baltic and Russia in the Mediterranean. "The Government of St. Petersburg once transferred to Constantinople, and Russia thenceforth becomes the first maritime power in Europe," is the universal cry of the alarmists. *How?* Oh! the oaks of Bosnia, which are the finest in the world for shipbuilding, would be then at her command! But where would the sailors be found by a power possessing no mercantile marine? Napoleon thought vainly to create a navy from these very forests; he ordered tools to



be forged in the country, and roads to be cut, by which the French legions might penetrate into Illyria, and the oaks of Bosnia be thus transported to the harbours of the Adriatic. He, moreover, contrived to bring the forests of Switzerland to Antwerp, by constructing the famous shoot down the side of Mount Pilatus. The timber rotted in his harbours, for how could the navies arise, whilst England commanded the trade of the ocean? Napoleon Bonaparte was a madman in all that related to commercial science; and his disastrous fate was the inevitable consequence; but they, who with his example before them, can assume the existence of the largest navy in the world, *in the possession of a people whose carrying trade is in the hands of another nation*, without the previous growth of manufactures and commerce are, in that particular, more hopelessly mad than the Corsican usurper. As well and as wisely might they assume the existence of the ripened harvest when no seed had been sown, or reckon on the growth of a city where neither builders nor inhabitants had ever existed! Until Russia becomes a great trading empire, she will not be in even the path for surpassing us in naval power. We have elsewhere shown that she cannot enlarge her commerce without thereby enriching us, even more than any other people; how then can Russia hope to become equal to ourselves upon the ocean, unless England should, for the purpose of enabling her to do so, resolve to stand still? \*

But supposing that Russia were to seize the first moment of her occupancy of Turkey to begin to build ships of war, and by the aid of Greek sailors to man a fleet at Constantinople;

\* When the measures for conciliating the respective commercial interests of parties in the Irish Union were arranging, the opinion of practical men was taken as to the period at which the cotton manufacture of Ireland might be able to go on, in competition with that of England, without the help of protecting duties; and Mr. William Orr, of Dublin, who had introduced the manufacture into that country, was asked if he thought it likely that in ten years the Irish manufacturers would overtake the English in skill? Mr. Orr replied:—"Yes, if the English can be persuaded during that time to stand still."



and presuming, moreover, that having obtained violent possession of Norway, she were to employ similar means for erecting a naval power in the Baltic: let us then call the attention of our readers to the defenceless and dependent position in which her territory would be placed, owing to the peculiar geographical features of those quarters of the globe. The sole outlet for the waters of the Sea of Marmora and the Black Sea is by the canal of the Dardanelles, called the Hellespont; a passage whose navigable width scarcely exceeds two thousand yards for a length of thirty miles. To blockade the entrance of this Strait would require that a couple of ships of the line, a frigate, and a steamer, should be stationed at its mouth, and with no larger force than this might the egress of any vessel be prevented from the interior seas; and not only so, but as these four men-of-war would constitute, in the eyes of all foreign powers, and according to the law of nations, a sufficient blockade, they would deprive Constantinople and the whole Turkish empire of all foreign trade, besides shutting out from the commerce of the Mediterranean Sea, and the rest of the world, the entire coast of the Euxine, and its thousands of miles of tributary rivers. If we now transfer our attention to the northern portions of the Russian empire, we shall find that the passage of the Sound, through which all the trade of the Baltic is compelled to pass, is scarcely less narrow than that of the Hellespont; and provided Russia had gained possession of the interior of these Straits, according to the supposition of the alarmists, then half a dozen ships of war might hermetically seal the whole of northern Europe against the trade of the world. In short, Russia, with the addition of Turkey, would possess but two outlets, each more contracted than the River Thames at Tilbury Fort; and as these could be declared in a state of blockade by less than a dozen vessels of war, it is clear that nature herself has doomed Russia to be in a condition of the most abject and prostrate subjection to the will of the maritime powers. This is a point of paramount importance in estimating the future

growth of the country under consideration. It should never be lost sight of for a moment, in arguing upon the subject, that Russia, in possession of Turkey and all the coasts of the Black Sea, besides her present stupendous expanse of territory, would still be denied, by the hand of Nature herself, a navigation of more than three miles in width, to connect her millions of square leagues of territory with the rest of the globe—a peculiarity the more striking since it could not be found to exist in any other quarter of the earth. It is deserving of notice, that these two narrow straits, which guard the entrances to the Black Sea and the Baltic, are nearly six months' sail distant from each other; and the track by which alone they can communicate lying through the Straits of Dover and of Gibraltar, it must be apparent that, were Russia the mistress of those channels, she could not pass from the one to the other, unless she were in amicable connection with Great Britain.\*

There remains but one more point requiring our consideration in connection with the abstract question of Muscovite aggrandisement. They who predict the unbounded extension of Russia, forget the inevitable growth of weakness which attends the undue expansion of territorial dominion.† Not only can they foresee without difficulty the conquest of Germany, France, Spain, Persia, and India, but they are, at the same time, blind to the dangers which must attend the attempt to incorporate into one cumbrous empire these remote

\* During the war between Russia and the Porte, in 1791, the Government of St. Petersburg, anxious to send a fleet to attack the Turkish power in the Archipelago, requested permission of the Dutch and English to be allowed to refit the vessels and take in stores at one of their ports; and failing in this application, the expedition was abandoned.

† "In large bodies the circulation of power must be less at the extremities: Nature herself has said it. The Turk cannot govern Egypt as he governs Thrace, nor has he the same dominion in the Crimea and Algiers which he has at Brusa and Smyrna. Despotism itself is obliged to truck and huckster; the Sultan gets such obedience as he can; he governs with a loose reign that he may govern at all: it is the eternal law of extension and detached empire."—BURKE.

and heterogeneous nations. In all ages and climes nature has given the boundaries for different communities; and we find that not only are the several families of the earth generally enclosed by seas or mountains to mark the limits of their respective territories, but the rivers usually flow through lands inhabited by people of one language—thus constituting a double natural line of demarcation. For example, the Alps and the Pyrenees afford the barriers beneath the opposite sides of which repose the French, Spanish, and Italian nations—within which arise the Rhone and Garonne of France, the Tagus and Guadalquiver of the Peninsula, and the Po and Adige of Italy; each of which may be almost said to water integral countries. And, seeing that these allotments of the earth's surface are sufficiently defined by the hand of nature to have drawn together in the earliest ages the scattered seed of Adam into separate and distinct families, how infallibly shall the same natural limits suffice to *preserve* those distinctions, when aided by those potent safeguards of nationality, the diversified histories, religions, languages, and laws of ancient and powerful empires! These are reflections that do not seem to have occurred to those writers who assign the sovereignty of Europe and Asia over to Russia; and, even if they had crossed their minds, such trifling impediments could hardly have discouraged them, after having surmounted so much greater obstacles. For assuredly they who can bestow upon Russia the supremacy of the seas, whilst her carrying trade is in the hands of England—or who can award her the victory over rich, united, and powerful nations, without the previous possession of money, *materiel*, or provisions for her armies—need not be daunted by such trifling natural difficulties as the Himalayas or the Alps present against the concentrations of a government over her conquests; or feel a moment's alarm about regulating with the same tariff the commerce of the Rhine, Danube, Neva, and Ganges.

We have now, we believe, noticed every argument with

which it has been the custom to urge us to participate in Russian and Turkish quarrels and intrigues ; and we have endeavoured to show, by a candid appeal to facts, that the dangers with which we are threatened in our commerce, colonies, or national dominion, from the power of Russia, are chimerical. We have likewise shown that the prejudices existing in the minds of the British people against that Power, and which have been industriously fostered by the writers and speakers of the day, are founded in delusion and misrepresentation ; that the spread of Russian Empire has invariably increased, instead of diminishing the growth of civilisation and commerce ; that she owes her extension less to her own forces, which we have shown to be weak, than to the disunion or barbarism of her neighbours ; and that the very nature of her geographical position must always keep her in dependence upon the goodwill of other maritime powers. Where, then, are the motives—seeing that Russia has not inflicted the slightest wrong upon *us*, or even contemplated one substantial injury to *our* people—for the warlike spirit which now pervades the current writings and speeches upon the subject of that nation ?

*We do not know—for we have not been able in our researches upon the subject to discover—one solitary ground upon which to found a pretence, consistent with reason, common sense, or justice, for going to war with Russia.*

## CHAPTER III.

### THE BALANCE OF POWER.

OUR object has not only been to deprecate war as the greatest evil that can befall a people, but to show that we have no interest in maintaining the *status quo* of Turkey; and, consequently, that the armaments, which, in a time of peace, are maintained, at an enormous cost, for the purpose of making demonstrations in favour of that country, and against Russia, might be reduced, and their expense spared to the taxpayers of the British Empire.

We shall here be encountered with a very general prepossession in favour of our maintaining what is termed a rank amongst the states of the Continent—which means, not that we should be free from debt, or that our nation should be an example to all others for the wealth, education, and virtues of its people, but that England shall be consulted before any other countries presume to quarrel or fight; and that she shall be ready, and shall be called upon, to take a part in every contention, either as mediator, second, or principal. So prevalent and so little questioned has this egotistical spirit become, that, when an honourable member rises in Parliament, to call upon a minister of the crown to account for some political changes in Spain, Portugal, or Turkey—instead of the question encountering the laughter of the House (as such an inquiry would probably do from the homely representatives who meet to attend to their constituents' affairs at Washington), or the questioner being put down by the functionary, with something after Cain's answer, "Am I the Spaniard's keeper?"—the latter offers grave explanations and excuses, whilst the audience looks on with silent attention, as though every word of our foreign secretary were pregnant with the fate of nations bowing to his sway.

If we go back through the Parliamentary debates of the last few reigns, we shall find this singular feature in our national character—the passion for meddling with the affairs of foreigners—more strikingly prominent in every succeeding session ; and, at the breaking out of the French Revolution, the reader is astonished to see that the characters of the leaders of the mobs of Paris, Marseilles, and Lyons, and the conduct of the government of France, became the constant subjects of discussion in the House of Commons, almost to the exclusion of matters of domestic interest—Pitt and Burke on one side, and Fox, Grey, and Sheridan on the other, attacking and defending the champions of the Revolution, with the same ardour as if the British legislature were a responsible tribunal, erected over the whole of Christendom, and endowed with powers to decide without appeal, the destinies of all the potentates and public men of Europe.\* Unhappily, the same passion had impregnated the minds of the public generally (as it continues to do down to our own day), and the result was, as everybody knows, the Bourbon crusade. But England, in taking upon herself to make war with the spirit of the age, encountered the Fates ; and, instead of destroying that infant

\* That this spirit still survives in full vigour may be shown by the motion recently made in the House of Commons by Mr. T. Duncombe, for interceding with the French Government in behalf of the state prisoners at Ham. Prince Polignac and his confederates attempted, by their *coup d' état*, to deprive France of law, place the whole country in the hands of despots, and reduce it to the monkish ignorance of the middle ages, by giving again to priests and bigots the absolute power over the printing press. In this attempt they failed ; but freedom conquered at the cost of hundreds of victims. *In England, or any other country but France, those ministers would have suffered death.* Yet, after five years of confinement, behold us interfering with the course of justice in an empire with whose internal concerns we are no more entitled to mix than with those of China !

Within a week of this display, a lad was transported from Macclesfield for fourteen years, *for stealing a pair of stockings.* We recommend this to our facetious Gallic neighbours as a fit opportunity for intervention : the mother should be induced to write her case to M. Odillon Barrot, or some other popular member of the Chamber of Deputies.

freedom which, however monstrous and hideous at its birth, was destined to throw off its bloody swathes, and, in spite of the enmity of the world, to dispense the first taste of liberty to Europe—*she was herself the nurse that, by her opposition, rocked the French Revolution into vigorous maturity.*

Our history during the last century may be called the tragedy of “British intervention in the politics of Europe;” in which princes, diplomatists, peers, and generals, have been the authors and actors—the people the victims; and the moral will be exhibited to the latest posterity in 800 millions of debt.

We have said that our proposal to reduce our armaments will be opposed upon the plea of maintaining a proper attitude, as it is called, amongst the nations of Europe. British intervention in the state policy of the Continent has been usually excused under the two stock pretences of maintaining the balance of power in Europe, and of protecting our commerce; upon which two subjects, as they bear indirectly on the question in hand, we shall next offer a few observations.

The first instance in which we find the “balance of power” alluded to in a king’s speech is on the occasion of the last address of William III. to his Parliament, December 31, 1701, where he concludes by saying—“I will only add this—if you do in good earnest desire to see England *hold the balance of Europe*, it will appear by your right improving the present opportunity.” From this period down to almost our time (latterly indeed, the phrase has become, like many other cant terms, nearly obsolete), there will be found, in almost every successive king’s speech, a constant recurrence to the “balance of Europe;” by which, we may rest assured, was always meant, however it might be concealed under pretended alarm for the “equilibrium of power” or the “safety of the Continent,” the desire to see England “hold the balance.” The phrase was found to please the public ear; it implied something of equity; whilst England, holding the balance of Europe in her hand, sounded like filling the office of Justice herself to one half of

the globe. Of course such a post of honour could not be maintained, or its dignity asserted, without a proper attendance of guards and officers, and we consequently find that at about this period of our history large standing armies began to be called for; and not only were the supplies solicited by the government from time to time under the plea of preserving the liberties of Europe, but in the annual mutiny bill (*the same in form as is now passed every year*) the preamble stated, amongst other motives, that the annual army was voted for the purpose of *preserving the balance of power in Europe*. The "balance of power," then, becomes an important practical subject for investigation. It appeals directly to the business and bosoms of our readers, since it is implicated with an expenditure of more than a dozen millions of money per annum, every farthing of which goes, in the shape of taxation, from the pockets of the public.

Such of our readers as have not investigated this subject will not be a little astonished to find a great discrepancy in the several definitions of what is actually meant by the "balance of power." The theory—for it has never yet been applied to practice—appears, after upwards of a century of acknowledged existence, to be less understood now than ever. Latterly, indeed, many intelligent and practical-minded politicians have thrown the question overboard, along with that of the balance of trade, of which number, without participating in their favoured attributes, we claim to be ranked as one. The balance of power, which has for a hundred years been the burden of kings' speeches, the theme of statesmen, the ground of solemn treaties, and the cause of wars; which has served, down to the very year in which we write, and which will, no doubt, continue to serve for years to come as a pretence for maintaining enormous standing armaments by land and sea, at a cost of many hundreds of millions of treasure—the balance of power is a chimera! It is not a fallacy, a mistake, an imposture, it is an undescribed, indescribable, incompre-



hensible nothing ; mere words, conveying to the mind not ideas, but sounds like those equally barren syllables which our ancestors put together for the purpose of puzzling themselves about words, in the shape of *Prester John* or the *philosopher's stone* ! We are bound, however, to see what are the best definitions of this theory.

“By this balance,” says Vattel, “is to be understood such a disposition of things as that no one potentate or state shall be able absolutely to predominate and prescribe laws to the others.”—*Law of Nations*, b. 3, c. 3, § 47.

“What is usually termed a balance of power,” says Gentz, “is that constitution subsisting amongst neighbouring states more or less connected with one another by virtue of which no one among them can injure the independence or essential rights of another without meeting with effectual resistance on some side, and, consequently, exposing itself to danger.”—*Fragments on the Political Balance*, c. 1.

“The grand and distinguishing feature of the balancing system,” says Brougham, “is the perpetual attention to foreign affairs which it inculcates, the constant watchfulness over every nation which it prescribes, the subjection in which it places all national passions and antipathies to the fine and delicate view of remote expediency, the unceasing care which it dictates of nations most remotely situated and apparently unconnected with ourselves, the general union which it has effected of all the European powers, obeying certain laws, and actuated in general by a common principle ; in fine, the right of mutual inspection universally recognised among civilised states in the rights of public envoys and residents.”—*Brougham's Colonial Policy*, b. 3, § 1.

These are the best definitions we have been able to discover of the system denominated the balance of power. In the first place it must be remarked that, taking any one of these descriptions separately, it is so vague as to impart no knowledge even of the writer's meaning, whilst, if taken together, one

confuses and contradicts another, Gentz describing it to be "a constitution subsisting among neighbouring states more or less connected with each other," whilst Brougham defines it as "dictating a care of nations most remotely situated and apparently unconnected with ourselves." Then it would really appear, from the laudatory tone applied to the system by Vattel, who says that it is "such a disposition of things as that no one potentate or state *shall be able* absolutely to predominate and prescribe laws to the others," as well as from the complacent manner in which Brougham states "the general *union which it has effected* of all the European powers, obeying certain laws, and actuated in general by a common principle," it would seem from such assurances as these that there was no necessity for that "perpetual attention to foreign affairs," or that "constant watchfulness over every nation," which the latter authority tells us the system "prescribes and inculcates." The only point on which these writers, in common with many other authors and speakers in favour of the balance of power, agree, is in the fundamental delusion that such a system was ever acceded to by the nations of Europe. To judge from the assumption by Brougham of a "general *union* among all the European powers;" from the allusion made by Gentz to that *constitution* subsisting among neighbouring states;" or from Vattel's reference to "a *disposition of things*," &c., one might be justified in inferring that a kind of federal union had existed for the last century throughout Europe in which the several kingdoms had found, like the States of America, uninterrupted peace and prosperity. But we should like to know at what period of history such a compact amongst the nations of the Continent was entered into. Was it previously to the peace of Utrecht? Was it antecedent to the Austrian war of succession? Was it prior to the seven years' war or to the American war? Or did it exist during the French revolutionary wars? Nay, what period of the centuries during which Europe has (with only just sufficient intervals to enable the combatants

to recruit their wasted energies) been one vast and continued battle-field, will Lord Brougham fix upon to illustrate the salutary working of that "balancing system" which "places all national passions and antipathies in subjection to the fine and delicate view of remote expediency?"

Again, at what epoch did the nations of the Continent subscribe to that constitution "by virtue of which," according to Gentz, "no one among them can injure the independence or essential rights of another?" Did this constitution exist whilst Britain was spoiling the Dutch at the Cape or in the east? or when she dispossessed France of Canada? or (worse outrage by far) did it exist when England violated the "essential rights" of Spain by taking forcible and felonious possession of a portion of her native soil? \* Had this constitution been subscribed by Russia, Prussia, and Austria at the moment when they signed the partition of Poland? or by France when she amalgamated with a portion of Switzerland? by Austria at the acquisition of Lombardy? by Russia when dismembering Sweden, Turkey, and Persia? or by Prussia before incorporating Silesia?

So far from any such confederation having ever been, by written, verbal, or implied agreement, entered into by the "European powers, obeying certain laws, and actuated in general by a common principle;" the theory of the balance of

\* The conquests of colonies have been regarded with some complacency because they are merely, in most instances, reprisals for previous depredations by the parent state; but England for fifty years at Gibraltar is a spectacle of brute violence unmitigated by any such excuses. Upon no principle of morality can this unique outrage upon the integrity of an ancient, powerful, and renowned nation, placed at a remote distance from our shores, be justified. The example, if imitated, instead of being shunned, universally, would throw all the nations of the earth into barbarous anarchy, and deprive mankind of the blessings of law, justice, and religion. It is time not only to think, but to speak, of these things in a spirit of honest truth. The people of this country—the middling and working classes—have no interest, as we shall by-and-by have to show, in these acts of unjust aggression and foreign violence. Alas for the cause of morals if they had!

power has, we believe, generally been interpreted, by those who, from age to age, have, parrotlike, used the phrase, to be a system invented for the very purpose of supplying the want of such a combination. Regarding it for a moment in this point of view, we should still expect to find that the "balancing system" had, at some period of modern history, been recognised and agreed to by all the Continental states; and that it had created a spirit of mutual concession and guarantee, by which the weaker and more powerful empires were placed upon a footing of equal security, and by which any one potentate or state was absolutely unable "to predominate over the others." But, instead of any such self-denial, we discover that the balance of Europe has merely meant (if it has had a meaning) that which our blunt Dutch king openly avowed as his aim to his parliament—a desire, on the part of the great powers, to "*hold the balance of Europe.*" England has, for nearly a century, held the European scales—not with the blindness of the goddess of justice herself, or with a view to the equilibrium of opposite interests, but with a Cyclopean eye to her own aggrandisement. The same lust of conquest has actuated, up to the measure of their abilities, the other great powers; and, if we find the smaller states still, in the majority of instances, preserving their independent existence, it is owing, not to the watchful guardianship of the "balancing system," but to the limits which nature herself has set to the undue extension of territorial dominion—not only by the physical boundaries of different countries, but in those still more formidable moral impediments to the invader—the unity of language, laws, customs, and traditions; the instinct of patriotism and freedom; the hereditary rights of rulers; and, though last not least, that homage to the restraints of justice which nations and public bodies \* have in all ages avowed, however they may have found excuses for evading it.

\* "Mankind, although reprobates in detail, are always moralists in the gross."—*Montesquieu*.

So far, then, as we can understand the subject, the theory of a balance of power is a mere chimera—a creation of the politician's brain—a phantasm, without definite form or tangible existence—a mere conjunction of syllables, forming words which convey sound without meaning. Yet these words have been echoed by the greatest orators and statesmen of England; they gingled successively from the lips of Bolingbroke, Chatham, Pitt, Burke, Fox, Sheridan, Grey, and Brougham—ay, even whilst we were in the act of stripping the maritime nations of the Continent of their colonies, then regarded as the sole source of commercial greatness; whilst we stood sword in hand upon the neck of Spain, or planted our standard on the rock of Malta; and even when England usurped the dominion of the ocean, and attempted to extend the sphere of human despotism over another element, by insolently putting barriers upon that highway of nations—even then the tongues of our orators resounded most loudly with the praises of the “balance of power!”\* There would be something peculiarly humiliating in connection with this subject, in beholding the greatest minds of successive ages, instead of exercising the faculty of thought, become the mere automata of authority, and retail, with less examination than the haberdasher bestows upon the length, breadth, and quality of his wares, the sentiments bequeathed from former generations of writers and speakers—but that, unhappily, the annals of philosophy and of past religions afford too many examples of the triumph of mere imitativeness over the higher faculties of the human intellect.

\* The phrase was actually adopted by Napoleon! who told O'Meara, at St. Helena, that he refused to permit the Emperor Alexander to occupy the Dardanelles, because, if Russia were in possession of Turkey, the “balance of power” in Europe would be destroyed! Lord Dudley Stuart sees much to admire in this regard for the balance of power by one who had himself been in military occupation of all the principal states of Europe:—“But the profound views of that great man Napoleon, told him not to accede to either the demands or entreaties of Alexander; and, on that occasion, though he had invaded the Turkish empire himself, he saved it by refusing the passage of the Dardanelles to Russia; nay, he saved Europe itself.”—*Lord Stuart's Speech, February 19.*

We must not, however, pass over the "balance of power" without at least endeavouring to discover the meaning of a phrase which still enters into the preamble of an annual act of Parliament, for raising and maintaining a standing army of ninety thousand men. The theory, according to the historian Robertson, was first invented by the Machiavellian statesmen of Italy during the prosperous era of the Florentine (miscalled) republic ; and it was imported into Western Europe in the early part of the sixteenth century, and became "fashionable," to use the very word of the historian of Charles V., along with many other modes borrowed, about the same time, from that commercial and civilised people. This explanation of its origin does not meet with the concurrence of some other writers ; for it is singular, but still consistent with the ignis-fatuus character of the "balance of power," that scarcely two authors agree, either as to the nature or the precise period of invention of the system. Lord Brougham claims for the theory an origin as remote as the time of the Athenians ; and Hume describes Demosthenes to have been the first advocate of the "balancing system" — very recommendatory, remembering that ancient history is little else than a calendar of savage wars ! There can be little doubt, however, that the idea, by whomsoever or at whatever epoch conceived, sprang from that first instinct of our nature, fear, and originally meant at least some scheme for preventing the dangerous growth of the power of any particular state ; *that power being always regarded, be it well remembered, as solely the offspring of conquest and aggrandisement* : notwithstanding, as we have had occasion to show in a former page of this pamphlet, in the case of England and the United States, that labour, improvements, and discoveries confer the greatest strength upon a people ; and that, by these alone, and not by the sword of the conqueror, can nations, in modern and all future times, hope to rise to supreme power and grandeur. And it must be obvious that a system professing to observe a "balance of power"—by which, says Vattel, "no

one potentate or state shall be able absolutely to predominate ;” or, according to Gentz, “to injure the independence or essential rights of another ;” by which, says Brougham, “a perpetual attention to foreign affairs is inculcated, and a constant watchfulness over every nation is prescribed :”—it must be obvious that such a “balancing system”—if it disregards those swiftest strides towards power which are making by nations excelling in mechanical and chemical science, industry, education, morality, and freedom—must be altogether chimerical.

Lord Bacon, indeed, took a broader and more comprehensive view of this question when he wrote, in his essay on empire—“*First*, for their neighbours, there can no general rule be given (the occasions are so variable) save one, which ever holdeth ; which is, that princes do keep due sentinel, that none of their neighbours do overgrow so (by increase of territory, by *embracing of trade*, by approaches, *or the like*), as they become more able to annoy them than they were : and this is generally the work of standing councils, to see and *to hinder it*.” This appears to us to be the only sound and correct view of such a principle as is generally understood by the phrase, “the balance of power.” It involves, however, such a dereliction of justice, and utter absence of conscientiousness, that subsequent writers upon the subject have not dared to follow out the principle of hindering the growth of trade, and the like (which includes all advance in civilisation) ; although, to treat it in any other manner than that in which it is handled by this “wisest, greatest, meanest of mankind,” is to abandon the whole system to contempt, as unsound, insufficient, and illusory.\* As for the

\* Lord Bacon’s political maxims are full of moral turpitude. “Nobody can,” says he, in speaking of kingdoms and estates, “be healthful without exercise—neither natural body nor politic ; and certainly to a kingdom or estate, a just and honourable war is the true exercise.” Accordingly, just wars are necessary ; and as there must be an opposite party to a just war, *ergo*, unjust wars are necessary ! In speaking of kings, he calls them “mortal gods on earth.” And, in his chapter on seditions and troubles, he gives many rules for governing and restraining, but not one for instructing the people. We speak of the moral sentiments of this great man distinctly from his intellectual powers.



*rule* of Lord Bacon ; were the great enemy of mankind himself to summon a council, to devise a law of nations which should convert this fair earth, with all its capacity for life, enjoyment, and goodness, into one vast theatre of death and misery, more dismal than his own Pandemonium, the very words of the philosopher would compose that law ! It would reduce us even below the level of the brute animals. *They* do not make war against their own instincts ; but this “rule” would, if acted upon universally, plunge us into a war of annihilation with that instinct of progression which is the distinguishing nature of intellectual man. It would forbid all increase in knowledge, which, by the great writer’s own authority, is power. It would interdict the growth of morality and freedom, which are power. Were Lord Bacon’s “rule” enforced, not only would the uninstructed Russians commence a crusade against our steam-engines and our skilful artisans ; the still more barbarous Turk would be called upon to destroy the civilisation and commerce of Petersburg ; the savage African would be warranted, nay, compelled to reduce the turbaned Osmanli to his own nakedness and a wigwam ; nor would the levelling strife cease until either the “*rule*” were abrogated, or mankind had been reduced to the only pristine possessions—teeth and nails ! \*

\* There appears to be one honourable member of the British legislature, and only one, who is an advocate of this policy. Sir Harry Verney, in speaking after Mr. T. Attwood, upon the subject of Russia (see *Mirror of Parliament*, 1833, p. 2878) said—“ The honourable gentleman has represented Russia as a state sunk in barbarism and ignorance, and hostile to every species of liberty. *I would to God that such a description of Russia were correct !!!* I believe the reverse to be the fact. I believe there is no power on earth which resorts to such effectual means of propagating her power, civilising her country, promoting commerce, manufactures, the acquirement of useful information, and the propagation of every useful institution, as Russia. Does the honourable gentleman know that at this moment steam-boats navigate the Volga ; and that you may travel in all parts of Russia in the same way as you may through the United States ? Does the honourable gentleman know that the Emperor of Russia sends abroad agents in whom he can confide, to obtain information relative to improvements and inventions which may be useful to himself ? \* \* \* I am



The balance of power, then, might in the first place, be very well dismissed as *chimera*, because no state of things, such as the "disposition," "constitution," or "union" of European powers referred to as the basis of their system, by Vattel, Gentz, and Brougham, ever did exist; and, secondly, the theory could, on other grounds, be discarded as *fallacious*, since it gives no definition—whether by breadth of territory, number of inhabitants, or extent of wealth—according to which, in balancing the respective powers, each state shall be estimated; whilst, lastly, it would be altogether incomplete and inoperative from neglecting, or refusing to provide against, the silent and peaceful aggrandisements which spring from improvement and labour. Upon these triple grounds, the question of the balance of power might be dismissed from further consideration. We shall, however, assume, merely for the sake of argument, that such an equilibrium existed in complete efficiency; and the first inquiry that suggests itself is—Upon what principle is Turkey made a member of this European system? The Turks, at least, will be admitted by everybody, to form no party to this "*union*;" nor do they give that "perpetual attention to foreign affairs which it inculcates;" or that "constant watchfulness over every nation which it prescribes." They never read of the balance of power in the Koran; and they live in pious and orthodox ignorance of the authorities for this "fine quite sure that, if this country would maintain the balance of power, we must oppose the encroachments of Russia."

A Yankee punster would exclaim—"Sir Harry goes the whole *hog* with *Bacon* upon the 'balance of power!'"

Yes, Sir Harry is right. He and the noble author of the "*Novum Organum*" are the only two philosophers who have taken a true and consistent view of the question. We are far, however, from including them both under one rule of inculcation. The honourable member for Buckinghamshire errs, perhaps, intellectually, and not morally. His chief fault, or rather misfortune, is, that he lives in Buckingham. Let him and the Marquis of Chandos go through a course of Adam Smith and the economists, beginning with Harriet Martineau; and they will then be convinced that we cannot profit by the barbarism of another people, or be injured by their progress in civilisation, *any more than the British nation can gain by the corn laws.*

and delicate" theory; for the names of Bacon, Vattel, and Brougham are nowhere recorded by the prophet! Turkey cannot enter into the political system of Europe; for the Turks are not Europeans. During the nearly four centuries that that people have been encamped upon the finest soil of the Continent, so far from becoming one of the families of Christendom, they have not adopted one European custom. Their habits are still Oriental, as when they first crossed the Bosphorus. They scrupulously exclude their females from the society of the other sex; they wear the Asiatic dress; sit cross-legged, or loll upon couches, using neither chair nor bed; they shave their heads, retaining their beards; and they use their fingers still, in the place of those civilised substitutes, knives and forks. Equally uninfluenced, after nearly four hundred years' contact with Europeans, is the Osmanli's condition by the discoveries and improvements of modern times. A printing press may be said to be unknown in Turkey; or, if one be found at Constantinople, it is in the hands of foreigners. The steam engine, gas, the mariner's compass, paper money, vaccination, canals, the spinning-jenny, and railroads, are mysteries not yet dreamed about by Ottoman philosophers. Literature and science are so far from finding disciples amongst the Turks, that that people have been renowned as *twice* the destroyers of learning: in the splendid though corrupt remains of Greek literature at Constantinople; and by extinguishing the dawn of experimental philosophy, at the subversion of the Caliphate.

Down to within a few years of the present time, the Turks were viewed only as the scourge of Christian Europe. When, about a century and a half ago, Louis XIV. entered into an alliance with the Sublime Porte, the whole civilised world rang with indignation at the infamous and unnatural combination. And when, more than a century later, on the occasion of the capture of Ockzakow by the Russians, our most powerful minister (Pitt) proposed to forward succours to the aid of Turkey, such was the spirit of opposition manifested by the

country, that the armaments already prepared by the Government, under the sanction of a servile majority in the Parliament, were reluctantly countermanded. On that occasion, both Burke and Grey, although advocates of the balancing system, refused to acknowledge that the Turks formed parties to it. "He had never before heard it set forth,"\* said the former, "that the Turkish empire was considered as a part of the balance of power in Europe; they had nothing to do with European power; they considered themselves as wholly Asiatic. Where was the Turkish resident at our Court, the Court of Prussia, or of Holland? They despised and contemned all Christian princes as infidels, and only wished to subdue and exterminate them and their people. What had these worse than savages to do with the powers of Europe, but to spread war, destruction, and pestilence amongst them? All that was holy in religion, all that was moral and humane, demanded an abhorrence of everything that tended to extend the power of that cruel and wasteful empire. Any Christian power was to be preferred to these destructive savages. He had heard, with horror, that the Emperor had been obliged to give up to this abominable power those charming countries which border upon the Danube to devastation and pestilence." And, at a subsequent debate upon the same question,† Mr. Grey (now Earl Grey), who has been a still more zealous champion of the balance of power (having once declared that every peasant in England was deeply interested in its preservation), said, "that England had pursued this object too far would not be denied, when it was considered that, in her progress after it, she had travelled as far as the banks of the Black Sea."

And are the Turks of our own day less *cruel* or *savage*, that we should not only admit them within the pale of civilised nations, but impose on our people, for their defence, the burden

\* Burke's Speech, House of Commons, March 29, 1791.—See *Hansard's Parliamentary History*, vol. xxix., pp. 76, 77.

† See *Hansard's Parliamentary History*, vol. xxix., p. 929.

of enormous armaments? We appeal to Dr. Walsh's late account of the atrocities perpetrated at Constantinople upon the unarmed Greeks, at the revolt of that people; we refer to the horrible massacre of the peaceful and civilised population of Scio! Is this empire less *wasteful* now than when, forty-five years ago, Burke mourned over those fine provinces which were consigned to devastation and the crescent? We again recur to the description given to us by Walsh, and every other recent traveller, of the desolation that reigns throughout the Turkish dominions; we adduce those ruined cities, those deserted, though still fertile plains, and that population, wasting away in regions where ten times its numbers once found abundance; we point to the deplorable condition of agriculture, commerce, manufactures, and all the arts of life, in a country which comprised the ancient civilised world—to prove the waste of human life, happiness, wealth, and civilisation, that is suffered every year at the hands of this Mahometan Government. Has the pestilence ceased to ravage the Turkish territory? The quarantine now blockades, in a manner, from Christian Europe, Constantinople—standing upon the same latitude as Naples, Oporto, and New York, and chosen by Constantine as the most salubrious spot on earth—a city now the impure nurse and victim of the plague! Does Christianity or public virtue call upon us, in 1836, more than they did in 1791, to arm ourselves in behalf of Turkey? We point to the Koran and those orthodox vices which it inculcates—we refer to the slave trade and to polygamy, abominations which still flourish in that country, under the precept of the impostor of Mecca—to prove that neither religion nor morality can sanction the government of Great Britain in shedding a drop of the blood, or lavishing the treasure of Englishmen for the support of this “cruel,” “savage,” “wasteful,” “devastating,” “pestilential,” and “infidel” nation, in a conflict with Russia or any other Christian people.

There remains one, and but one, other point from which to

view the question of the balance of power, and we may then bid adieu to this monument of the credulity and facility of the human intellect for ever—or, at least, until we happen, perchance, to meet with it in the next year's Mutiny Bill, supplying the "*whereas*" of an act of parliament, with a pretext for maintaining a standing army of upwards of 90,000 men !

Russia, in possession of Constantinople, say the alarmists, would possess a port open at all seasons ; the materials for constructing ships ; vast tracts of fertile land, capable of producing cotton, silk, wool, etc. ; and she would be placed in a situation of easy access to our shores—all of which would tend to destroy the balance of power, and put in danger the interests of the British commerce, in particular. But New York, a port far more commodious than Constantinople, is open at all seasons ; the United States possess materials without end for ship-building ; their boundless territory of fertile land is adapted for the growth of cotton, silk, wool, etc. ; and New York is next door to Liverpool ; for—thanks to Providence !—there is no land intervening between the American continent and the shores of this United Kingdom. Yet, we have never heard that the North American continent forms any part of the balance of power ! Twenty-four sovereign, free, and independent States, altogether forgotten in a "balancing system, which dictates an increasing care even of nations most remotely situated, and apparently unconnected with ourselves !" We doubt the equilibrium can hardly be maintained. This is not all. There is the entire southern continent, from the Isthmus of Panama to the point of Cape Horn, likewise entirely omitted. Mercy on us, one scale will certainly kick the beam ! Twelve separate empires of South America, bounded on one extremity by Mexico, and on the other by Patagonia ; and the vast expanse of territory, settled and unsettled, under the dominion of the Government of Washington, and, altogether, comprising one-third of the habitable globe, have been quite forgotten in a balance of power !

Not having been supplied by the authors of the theory with any rule by which to judge of their mode of estimating or weighing the powers of the respective parties to the balancing system, and being equally uninformed as to the qualifications required from those States which aspired to the union, it would be presumptuous to guess upon what principle Turkey is admitted to a connection with England, from which Brazil is excluded; or why, in forming a balance of the civilised powers, the United States are rejected, in order to give room to admit Russia into one of the scales. It cannot be from proximity that Turkey is preferred to the Brazils. A voyage from Rio Janeiro to Liverpool will average about forty days; whilst the time taken in going from England to Constantinople usually reaches double that period. Nor can it arise from a comparison of our commerce with the two countries, which is four times as valuable with the American as the European State. Then a wise and provident regard to the future cannot be the guiding motive, since the prospect is altogether in favour of the trans-Atlantic empire, which embraces within its bounds a territory equalling in extent the whole of Russia in Europe, and forming the finest, and destined in all probability to be, both as respects vegetable and mineral riches, the most productive amongst all the countries in the world. Religion, language, national character, and the plague, all oppose the claim of the Turk to this preference over the Christian rival; and we can only suspend our conjectures, and entreat that some advocate of the "balancing system" will inform the world upon what *principle*, commercial, social, or political—in short, upon what ground, consistent with common sense—does the foreign secretary involve Great Britain in the barbarian politics of the Ottoman Government, to the manifest risk of future wars, and the present pecuniary sacrifice attending standing armaments; whilst, with another State, with which we are more deeply interested as traders, more identified as men, and from which we are, navally speaking, less distant, no political intercourse is

found necessary? The same argument applies, with more or less force, to the other eleven South American States, with each of which our commerce averages probably more in amount than with Turkey; yet, although they are Christian communities, all but universally at peace,\* and notwithstanding the future influence which they are inevitably destined to exercise over the interests of the entire world—these countries have not been thought worthy of admission into that system of civilised nations which is now agitated from one extremity to the other with the fate of Mahometan Turkey! However impossible it may be to speculate successfully upon the intended operation of a system which, in reality, never existed except in the precincts of the politician's brain, still it must be remembered that, at the time the theory was first invented, it proposed to give to the European powers owning American colonies, a weight proportioned to the extent of those possessions; and the question then arises—which we shall merely propound, and leave in despair, for the solution of such of our readers as may wish to pursue this chimerical inquiry still farther—By what ingenious process was the balance of power preserved, when England,

\* We add an extract from a letter, dated January 26, 1836, addressed to the author by a friend—a gallant officer, and an enlightened and amiable man, who himself holds an official rank at the British Court from one of the States of South America :—"You, who are so strong an advocate for peace and freedom, will be glad to hear of the tranquillity of America, and that our systems of government are at last working well. Of the thirteen trans-Atlantic republics, ten are now in a perfect state of order and prosperity. The capture of Puerto Cabello from a banditti who are in possession of it will restore that of Venezuela; and the next news from Peru will give us that of the peaceable settlement of its government. Mexico, therefore, will alone remain an exception to this peaceful state; and I am afraid she will long remain so; yet, in spite of the troubles of Mexico, she last year raised from her mines (according to the official report of the Minister of Finance, and without including what was smuggled), thirty millions of dollars, in gold and silver, being three millions more than was ever produced under the most flourishing year of the old Spanish Government. As to the national debts of America, the bonds of the United States were used to be sold by basketfuls, in the first years of their independence, yet they have now paid off the whole. You have about fourteen principal nations in Europe, and you know two or three of them have internal dissensions."



Spain, and Portugal were deprived of their trans-Atlantic territories? Canning, indeed, once talked of "calling into existence a new world, to adjust the balance of the old;" but, as in many other oratorical flourishes of our State-rhetorician, he meant quite a different practical object; in other and more homely language, that statesman proposed to acknowledge the independence of South America—ten years after every private individual of judgment had predicted the freedom of that Continent. To this day those States which once formed so important a part of the balancing system, as appendages to the mother countries, are wanting in the scales of Europe; and by what arts, *whether by false weights or the legerdmain of the nation still holding the balance*, the equilibrium can be preserved without them, constituting as they do nearly one-third of the terrestrial globe, is a mystery beyond the reach of our powers of divination.

We glanced at the comparative claims of Russia and the United States to be included in this imaginary States-union; a very few words upon this point are all that we shall add to our probably already too extended notice of the "balance of power."

Upon whatever principle the theory under consideration may have been at first devised—whether, according to Gentz, for the purpose of uniting neighbouring States, or, as Brougham asserts, with a view to the union of all the European powers—it is certain that it would have been held fatal to the success of the balancing system for any one power, and that one amongst the most civilised, wealthy, and commercial, to have refused to subscribe to its constitution. Yet the United States (for the number of its inhabitants), the richest, the most commercial, and, for either attack or defence, the most powerful of modern empires; a country which possesses a wider surface of fertile land than Russia could boast even with the accession of Turkey; and, instead of being imprisoned, like Russia, by the Dardanelles and the Sound, owning five thousand miles of coast,



washed by two oceans, and open to the whole world ; *the United States are not parties to the balance of power !* Ignorant as we are of the rule of admission to and exclusion from this balancing system, it would be vain to conjecture why Russia should be entitled, not only to be a member of this union, but to engross its exclusive attention, whilst North America is unknown or not recognised as of any weight in the balance of power. It cannot be, on our part, from closer neighbourhood ; for Russia, even at Constantinople, would—commercially and navally speaking—be three times as distant\* as New York from Great Britain. Nor on account of the greater amount of the European commerce transacted by Russia. The commerce of the United States with the countries of Europe is nearly as great in amount as that of the British empire with the Continent ; twice as large as the trade of France with the same quarters ; and three times that of Russia. It cannot be because of the more important nature of the trade which we carry on with Russia as compared with that with America, since the cotton of the latter gives employment and subsistence to more than a million of our people, and is actually indispensable to our commercial and political existence. Here are cogent reasons why the trans-Atlantic power should form a party to the union of States—why, at least, it should, in place of an empire situated upon the Baltic or Black Sea, be united in political bands with Great Britain. And wherefore is this rich, commercial, and this contiguous country—with a population more entirely enlightened than any besides, and whose improvements and institutions England and all Europe are eager to emulate—an alien to the “balancing system,” of which Turkey, Spain, and Persia are members ? It would be difficult to find any other satisfactory answer than that which we are able to give as the reason of this exclusion : *America, with infinite wisdom, refuses to be a party to the “balance of power.”*

\* The average time of the passage from New York to Liverpool, by the line of packet ships, is twenty-five days.

Washington (who could remember when the national debt of England was under fifty-five millions ; who saw it augmented, by the Austrian war of succession, to seventy-eight millions ; and again increased, by the seven years' war, to one hundred and forty-six millions ; and who lived to behold the first fruits of the French revolutionary wars, with probably a presentiment of the harvest of debt and oppression that was to follow—whose paternal eye looked abroad only with the patriotic hope of finding in the conduct of other nations example or warning for the instruction of his countrymen), seeing the chimerical objects for which England, *although an island*, plunged into the contentions of the Continent, with no other result to her suffering people but an enduring and increasing debt—bequeathed, as a legacy to his fellow-citizens, the injunction, that they should never be tempted by any inducements or provocations to become parties to the States' system of Europe. And faithfully, zealously, and happily has that testament been obeyed ! Down even to our day the feeling and conviction of the people, and consequently of the Government and the authors\* of the United States, have constantly increased in

\* Washington Irving has good humouredly satirised this national propensity for foreign politics in the well-known sketch of "John Bull." "He is," says that exquisite writer, "a busy-minded personage, who thinks, not merely for himself and family, but for all the country round, and is most generously disposed to be everybody's champion. He is continually volunteering his services to settle his neighbour's affairs, and takes it in great dudgeon if they engage in any matter of consequence without asking his advice ; though he seldom engages in any friendly office of the kind without finishing by getting into a squabble with all parties, and then railing bitterly at their ingratitude. He unluckily took lessons in his youth in the noble science of defence ; and having accomplished himself in the use of his limbs and weapons [i.e., *standing armies and navies*] and become a perfect master at boxing and cudgel play, he has had a troublesome life of it ever since. He cannot hear of a quarrel between the most distant of his neighbours but he begins incontinently to fumble with the head of his cudgel, and consider whether interest or honour does not require that he should meddle in their broils. Indeed he has extended his relations of pride and policy so completely over the whole country [i.e., *quadripartite treaties and quintuple alliances*] that no event can take place without infringing some of his finely-spun rights and dignities. Couched in his little domain, with those fila-

favour of a policy from which so much wealth, prosperity, and moral greatness have sprung. America, for fifty years at peace, with the exception of two years of defensive war, is a spectacle of the beneficent effects of that policy which may be comprised in the maxim—As little intercourse as possible betwixt the *Governments*, as much connection as possible between the *nations* of the world. And when England (*without being a republic*) shall be governed upon the same principles of regard for the interests of the people, and a like common sense view of the advantages of its position, we shall adopt a similar motto for our policy ; and then we shall hear no more mention of that costly chimera, the balance of power.

ments stretching forth in every direction, he is like some choleric, bottle-bellied old spider, who has woven his web over a whole chamber, so that a fly cannot buzz, nor a breeze blow, without startling his repose and causing him to sally forth wrathfully from his den. Though really a good-tempered, good-hearted old fellow at bottom, yet he is singularly fond of being in the midst of contention. It is one of his peculiarities, however, that he only relishes the beginning of an affray ; he always goes into a fight with alacrity, but comes out of it grumbling even when victorious ; and, though no one fights with more obstinacy to carry a contested point, yet, when the battle is over, and he comes to a reconciliation, he is so much taken up with the mere shaking of hands [*Lord Castlereagh at the Treaty of Vienna*] that he is apt to let his antagonists pocket all they have been grumbling about. It is not, therefore, fighting that he ought to be so much on his guard against as making friends. . . . All that I wish is, that John's present troubles may teach him more prudence in future ; [*nothing of the kind—look at him now, fifteen years after this was written, playing the fool again, ten times worse than ever, in Spain*] that he may cease to distress his mind about other people's affairs ; that he may give up the fruitless attempt to promote the good of his neighbours, and the peace and happiness of the world, by dint of the cudgel : that he may remain quietly at home ; gradually get his house into repair ; cultivate his rich estate according to his fancy ; husband his income—if he thinks proper ; bring his unruly children into order—if he can."—*Sketch Book.*

## CHAPTER IV.

### PROTECTION OF COMMERCE.

WE began the preceding remarks upon a question which, however universally recognised in former times, has now almost fallen into neglect, by quoting a passage from the last speech of King William III. to his Parliament; and—before proceeding to discuss that other, but still more popular, pretence for wars and standing armaments, *the protection of our commerce*—we shall give an extract or two from the latest (though we sincerely hope not the last) address of William IV. to his Reformed Parliament, delivered on the 4th of February, 1836:—

“I continue to receive from my allies, and, generally, from all foreign powers, assurances of their unaltered desire to cultivate with me those friendly relations which it is equally my wish to maintain with them; and the intimate union which happily subsists between this country and France is a pledge to Europe for the continuation of general peace.”

After the above passage, which contains, one would suppose, ample guarantees against war—since it not only conveys assurances of the peaceful disposition of *all* foreign powers towards this country, but adds, by way of making those assurances doubly sure, that the union which happily subsists between England and France is a pledge for the *continuance* of a general peace—comes the following:—

“The necessity of maintaining the maritime strength of the country, and of giving adequate protection to the extended commerce of my subjects, has occasioned some increase in the estimates for the naval branch of the public service.”

Now, if we felt some difficulty in apprehending the question of the “balancing principle,” we confess ourselves to be much more at a loss to understand what is here meant by the pro-

tection of commerce through an increase in the navy estimates. Our commerce is, in other words, our manufactures; and the first inquiry which occurs necessarily is, Do we need an augmentation of the naval force, in order to guard our ingenious artisans and industrious labourers, or to protect those precious results of their mechanical genius, the manufactories of our capitalists? This apprehension vanishes, if we refer to the assurances held out in the above double guarantee for the continuance of peace, that our shores are safe from foreign aggression. The next idea that suggests itself is, Does piracy increase the demand for vessels of war? We, who write in the centre of the largest export trade in the world, have not heard of even one complaint of violence done to British interests upon the ocean; and probably there are not to be found a dozen freebooters upon the face of the aquatic globe. South America demands no addition to the force upon its coasts at the present moment, when those several Governments are more firmly organised, and foreign interests consequently more secure, than at any previous period. China presents no excuse; for her policy is, fortunately for her territorial integrity, invulnerable to foreign attempts at "intervention." The rest of Asia is our own. Where, then, shall we seek for a solution of the difficulty, or how account for the necessity which called for the increase of our naval strength?

The commerce of this country, we repeat, is, in other words, its manufactures. Our exports do not consist, as in Mexico or Brazil, of the produce of our soil and our mines; or, as in France and the United States, of a mixture of articles of agricultural and manufacturing origin: but they may be said to be wholly produced by the skill and industry of the manufacturing population of the United Kingdom.\* Upon the prosperity, then, of this interest, hangs our foreign commerce; on which depends our external rank as a maritime state; our customs

\* We stated this familiar fact in a former pamphlet; but it is one that cannot be too frequently placed broadly before the public eye.

duties, which are necessary to the payment of the national debt; and the supply of every foreign article of our domestic consumption—every pound of tea, sugar, coffee, or rice, and all the other commodities consumed by the entire population of these realms. In a word, our national existence is involved in the well-doing of our manufacturers. If our readers—many of whom will be of the agricultural class, but every one of them nevertheless equally interested in the question—should ask, as all intelligent and reasoning minds ought to do, To what are we indebted for this commerce?—we answer, in the name of every manufacturer and merchant of the kingdom—The *cheapness* alone of our manufactures. Are we asked, How is this trade protected, and by what means can it be enlarged? The reply still is, By the *cheapness* of our manufactures. Is it inquired how this mighty industry, upon which depends the comfort and existence of the whole empire, can be torn from us?—we rejoin, Only by the *greater cheapness* of the manufactures of another country. These truths are, we presume, well known to the Government of Great Britain; at least, one member of the present cabinet is vigilantly alive to their momentous character, as we are going to show, by referring to a fact coming within our personal experience, and which bears pointedly upon the question in hand.

The Directors of the Chamber of Commerce of Manchester (of which board the author has the honour of being a member) were favoured, a short time since, with a communication from the Right Hon. C. P. Thomson, accompanied by an assortment of samples of various fabrics, which, in the diligent fulfilment of his official duties, he had caused to be procured from the several manufacturing districts of the Continent; and requesting a report as to the comparative relation which, after due examination, they might be found to bear towards the manufactures of England. Among these were patterns of Swiss Turkey-red chintz prints and of mixed cotton and linen Saxony drills—both of which commodities have been for some

time sold in those quarters—superior, both in cheapness and quality, to similar articles produced in this country: and, consequently, in reporting to the Board of Trade, the Directors of the Chamber of Commerce had the disagreeable duty of stating that, in those particular products of the loom and printing machine, we were beaten by our foreign rivals, and superseded in third or neutral markets. The causes of the advantage thus possessed over us by our competitors on the Continent, and which were pointed out to the attention of the Right Hon. President, are the heavy imposts still fettering our manufacturing energies, and the greater cost of the food of our workmen: the remedy is, obviously, a reduction of the duties on corn, oil, soap, &c. But, if, instead of naming such causes and remedies as these, the Manchester Chamber of Commerce had stated in its report that the prints of Switzerland and the drills of Saxony (*the governments of which two countries do not together own a ship of war, as we believe*) were cheaper than the like articles fabricated here, *because the British navy was not sufficiently strong*, and had advised for relief that half a million a year should be added to the navy estimates—would not a writ *de lunatico inquirendo* have justly been issued against those intelligent Directors, the writer's colleagues, without further evidence of their insanity! Yet, having seen that the only way in which we can protect our commerce is the cheapness of our manufactures, what other object can be meant, when the Government calls for an augmentation of the navy, with a view to the protection of our commerce, but some plan, however inappreciable to common minds, for reducing the expenditure of the country, and thereby relieving us from some of the burdensome imposts with which our race of competition is impeded?

But there is, in the second passage which we have just quoted from his Majesty's speech, a part which tends to throw more light upon the whole—where it refers to the necessity of giving adequate protection to the "*extended*" commerce of the

country. By which we are to infer that it is the principle of the government that the extension of our trade with foreign countries demands for its protection a corresponding augmentation of the royal navy. This, we are aware, was the policy of the last century, during the greater part of which the motto, "Ships, Colonies, and Commerce,"\* was borne upon the national escutcheon, became the watchword of statesmen, and was the favourite sentiment of public writers ; but this, which meant, in other words—"Men of war to conquer colonies, to yield us a monopoly of their trade," must now be dismissed, like many other equally glittering but false adages of our forefathers, and in its place we must substitute the more homely, but enduring maxim—*Cheapness*, which will command commerce ; and whatever else is needful will follow in its train.

At a time when all beyond the precincts of Europe was colonial territory, and when the trade of the world was, with the exception of China, almost wholly forced into false channels, by the hand of violence, which was no sooner withdrawn than, by its own inherent law—the law of nature—it again sought its proper level course, the increase of the navy necessarily preceded and accompanied an extension of our commerce. The policy of nations, *then*, if judged by the standard which we apply to the conduct of individuals *now*—and there can be no exculpation in multitudinous immorality—was, to waylay their customers, whom they first knocked down and disabled, and afterwards dragged into their stores and compelled to purchase whatever articles they chose to offer, at such prices as they chose to ask ! The independence of the New World has for ever put an end to the colonial policy of the Old, and with it that system of fraud and violence which for centuries characterised the commercial intercourse of the two hemispheres. And in that portentous truth, *the Americas are*

This is still a favourite toast at the annual meetings of the Pitt clubs, drunk by these consistent politicians who will not yield even to the inexorable reforms of trade,



*free*, teeming as it does with future change, there is nothing that more nearly affects our destiny than the total revolution which it dictates to the statesmen of Great Britain, in the commercial, colonial,\* and foreign policy of our Government. America is once more the theatre upon which nations are contending for mastery: it is not, however, a struggle for conquest, in which the victor will acquire territorial dominion—the fight is for commercial supremacy, and the battle will be won by the cheapest!

Whilst our trade rested upon our foreign dependencies, as was the case in the middle of the last century—whilst, in other words, force and violence were necessary to command customers for our manufactures—it was natural and consistent that almost every king's speech should allude to the importance of protecting the commerce of the country, by means of a powerful navy; but whilst, under the present more honest principles of trade, *cheapness* alone is necessary to command free and independent purchasers, and to protect our commerce, it must be evident that such armaments as impose the smallest possible tax upon the cost of our commodities must be the best adapted for the protection of our trade. But, besides dictating the disuse of warlike establishments, free trade (for of that beneficent doctrine we are speaking) arms its votaries by its own pacific nature, in that eternal truth—*the more any nation traffics abroad upon free and honest principles, the less it will be in danger of wars.*

\* We shall not enter upon the subject of the profit and loss of our colonies, which would require a volume. An acute writer of the day estimates the annual loss by our dependencies at something like four millions; but he loses sight altogether of the interest of the money spent in conquering them, which is twenty or thirty millions a year more! Leaving these unprofitable speculations as to the past, let us beg our readers to look at a chart of the world, and, after comparing the continent of free America with the specks of islands forming our colonial possessions, to ask himself whether, in choosing our *future* commercial course, the statesmen who presides at the helm of affairs ought to take that policy for his guide which shall conduct us to the market of the entire hemisphere, or that which prefers the minute fraction of it.

If, by way of example, we refer to the present commercial intercourse between the United States and this empire, how completely does it illustrate the force of the above maxim! At no period of history were two people, aliens to each other by birth, government, laws, and institutions, united indissolubly by one common interest and mutual dependence, like these distant nations. One-third\* of our whole exports consists of cotton manufactures, the raw material of which is produced from the soil of the United States. More than a million of our population depend upon the due supply of this cotton wool, for the labour of every succeeding day, and for the regular payment of their weekly wages. We sometimes hear objections against the free importation of corn, made on the ground that we should become dependent upon foreigners for bread; but here we have a million of people, whose power of purchasing not only bread, but meat, ay, or even potatoes, as well as clothing, is supplied from the annual growth of lands possessed by an independent nation, more than three thousand miles off. The equilibrium† of this stupendous industry is preserved by the punctual arrival from the United States of a quantity of raw cotton, averaging 15,000‡ bales weekly, or more than 2,000 bales a day; and it depends also upon the equally constant weekly departure of more than a quarter of a million sterling worth of cotton goods, exported to foreign parts. Now, what precaution is taken by the Government of this country to guard and regulate this precious flood of traffic? How many of those costly vessels of war, which are maintained

\* About one-half of our exports is of cotton origin; but we take one-third as the portion worked up from North American material.

† We wish those rhetorical statesmen, who talk so eloquently in favour of going to war to preserve the equilibrium of Europe, or the balance of power in Turkey, would condescend to give a thought as to its effects upon the equilibrium of our cotton manufacture.

‡ We confine our illustrative remarks on that part which we assume to be the growth of the United States; the total of our imports and exports of cotton is, of course, more than stated here.

at an expense to the nation of many millions of pounds annually, do our readers suppose, are stationed at the mouths of the Mersey and Clyde, to welcome and convoy into Liverpool and Glasgow the merchant ships from New York, Charleston, or New Orleans, all bearing the inestimable freight of cotton wool, upon which our commercial and social existence depends? Not one! What portion of our standing army, costing seven millions a year, is occupied in defending this more than Pactolus—this golden stream of trade, on which floats not only the wealth, but the hopes and existence of a great community? Four invalids at the Perch Rock Battery hold the sinecure office of defending the port of Liverpool! But our exports to the United States will reach this year, perhaps, in real or declared value, more than ten millions sterling, and nearly one half of this amount goes to New York:—what portion of the Royal navy is stationed off that port to protect our merchants' ships and cargoes? The appearance of a King's ship at New York is an occurrence of such rarity as to attract the especial notice of the public journals; whilst, all along the entire Atlantic coast of the United States—extending, as it does, more than 3,000 miles, to which we send a quarter of our whole yearly exports—there are stationed two\* British ships of only, and these two have also their stations at the West Indies.

No! this commerce, unparalleled in magnitude, between two remote nations, demands no armament as its guide or safeguard; nature itself is both. And will one rational mind recognise the possibility of these two communities putting a sudden stop to such a friendly traffic, and, contrary to every motive of self-interest, encountering each other as enemies? Such a rupture would be more calamitous to England than the sudden drying up of the river Thames; and more intolerable

\* See the *United Service Journal* for June, 1836, for a list of the ships of war and their stations, June 1st:—North American and West Indian stations, one 74 and one 52 guns.

to America than the cessation of sunshine and rain over the entire surface of one of her maritime states?

And if such is the character of free trade (or, in other words, all trade between independent nations), that it unites, by the strongest motives of which our nature is susceptible, two remote communities, rendering the interest of the one the only true policy of the other, and making each equally anxious for the prosperity and happiness of both; and if, moreover, every addition to the amount of traffic between two independent States forges fresh fetters, which rivet more securely these amicable bonds—how can the extension of our commerce call for an increase in our armaments, or how can a Government stand excused from the accusation of imposture, unless by the plea of ignorance, when it calls for an augmentation of the navy estimates, under the pretence of protecting our extended commerce?

But, to put this matter in another point of view, let us suppose that this mighty traffic between England and the United States, which is wholly governed by the talismanic law of “cheapness,” were suddenly interrupted, in the only way in which it can be disturbed—by some other people producing cheaper hardware, woollens, pottery, etc., to whom the Americans, guided solely by that self-interest which controls alike the commerce of every nation, could sell their cotton for a greater amount of those manufactures in return—could our Royal navy, were it even augmented to tenfold its present monstrous force, protect us from the loss of our commerce? To answer this question, we need only appeal to the experience of facts, to be found at this time operating in another quarter.

At the moment when we write the British naval force stationed in the Mediterranean amounts to thirty-six vessels of war,\* mounting altogether 1,320 guns, being rather more than a third of the death-dealing metal afloat in our King's ships.

\* See the *United Service Journal*, June 1, 1836, for a list of the stations of the British navy.

Our entire trade to all the nations bordering on this sea, and including the whole of that with Spain and France, amounts to very nearly the same as our exports to the United States ; in value or importance, however, it is not equal to the latter. Now, leaving for the present the question of the profitableness of carrying on a traffic with such heavy protecting expenses annexed, let us proceed to ascertain whether or not this prodigious and costly navy affords an *efficient* protection to our commerce in those quarters. The reader will bear in mind our statement, that the Chamber of Commerce of Manchester had the unpleasant task of reporting to the Board of Trade that the drill manufacturers of Saxony and the calico printers of Switzerland had superseded goods of the same descriptions, made in England, in third or neutral markets. *Those markets were in the Mediterranean !* This is not all. One of those markets, from which our manufacturers were reported to have been expelled, by a decree of far more potency than was penned by the hand of violence at Berlin and Milan, and prohibited by an interdict ten times more powerful than ever sprang from the Prussian league—the interdict of *dearness* ; one of those markets was *Gibraltar ! !* (We promised, a few pages back, to prove that the industrious middling and working classes of this empire have no interest in the violent and unjust seizure and retention of an integral portion of the Spanish territory ; and we have, in this simple fact, redeemed our pledge.) We give it to the reflecting portion of our readers, as a truth authenticated by the very best authority, and worthy of deep attention from the economist, the statesman, and the advocate of peace and of a moral ascendancy over physical force—that the artisans of Switzerland and of Saxony have achieved a victory over the manufacturers of England, upon her own fortress—the free port of Gibraltar ! We kiss the rod—we dote upon this fact, which teaches, through us, a lesson to mankind, of the inefficacy of brute violence in the trading concerns of the world. Let us pause, then, to recapitulate our

facts. On the one hand, behold a commerce with America, amounting to a quarter of the whole trade of the kingdom—upon which depends, from week to week, the subsistence of a million of people, and whereon rests our very existence as a commercial empire—conducted regularly, day by day, without the aid or intervention of ships of war to guide or coerce it; on the other, an armament, avowedly to protect our commerce, of 1,320 cannon, unable to guard our manufactures against the successful cheapness of the poorest, the weakest, and humblest community of the Continent—a community destitute of fleets, and without a standing army. The inference is plain—we have succeeded in establishing our premises; for, having proved that the (physically speaking) impregnable fortress of Gibraltar, with its triple lines of batteries, aided by thirty-six vessels of war, and altogether combining a greater quantity of artillery than was put in requisition to gain the victory of Waterloo, Trafalgar, or the Nile, surrenders our commerce into the hands of the Swiss and Saxons, unable to protect us against the cheaper commodities of those countries—we need not go further to show, since these two countries without navies are our witnesses of the facts, that armed fleets, armies, and fortresses, are not essential to the extension of commerce, and that they do not possess the power of protecting it against the *cheapness* of rivals. These may appear trite and familiar truths to our intelligent readers; our justification may be found, if needed, in the fact, that the Government has demanded and obtained an addition to our navy estimates, this session of Parliament, amounting to nearly half a million sterling per annum, under the pretence of *protecting* our commerce; and we do not recollect that one of our representatives rose from his seat to tell the minister, as we now tell him, that *his* is that kind of *protection* which the eagle affords to the lamb—*covering it to devour it*.

It will be seen that all which has been stated bears indirectly, but conclusively, upon the question of Russia and

Turkey, and affords an unanswerable argument against going to war to defend our commerce by means of naval armaments ; since it is plain, from the example of Gibraltar, that, even were Constantinople in our own power, its commerce could be retained only by our selling cheaper than other nations ; whilst, supposing it to be in the possession of Russia or any other people, the cheapness of our commodities will eventually command that market, in the same manner as the cheap drills and prints of Saxony and Switzerland supplant our goods, in spite of the batteries and fleets which defend our Spanish fortress.

Having thus shown that cheapness, and not the cannon or the sword, is the weapon through which alone we possess and can hope to defend or extend our commerce—having proved, also, that an increase of trade, so far from demanding an augmentation of warlike armaments, furnishes an increased safeguard against the chances of war—is it not clear that, to diminish the taxes and duties which tend to enhance the cost of our manufactures, by a reduction of our navy\* and army, is the obvious policy of a ministry which understands and desires to promote the true interests of this commercial nation ? Were our army and navy reduced to one-half of their present forces, and the amount saved applied to the abolition of the duties upon cotton, wool, glass, paper, oil, soap, drugs, and the thousand other ingredients of our manufactures, such a step would do more towards protecting and extending the commerce of Great Britain than an augmentation of the naval armaments to fifty times their present strength, even supposing such an increase could be effected with no addition to the national burdens.

Experience has shown that an overwhelming power at sea,

\* The public papers have announced that, owing to the demand for sailors for the royal navy, the merchants have been compelled to advance the wages of their hands. We have read the following notice upon the quay at Liverpool—*"Wanted, for his Majesty's Navy, a number of petty officers and able-bodied seamen."* It would seem that there is no want of *commissioned* officers ; which accounts for the increase of the navy estimates, we suspect.

whilst it cannot dictate a favourable commercial treaty with the smallest independent State (for such a spectacle of violence was never seen as a victorious admiral, sword in hand, prescribing the terms of a tariff to his prostrate foe), has had the effect of rousing national fear, hatred, and envy, in the breasts of foreigners; and these vile feelings of human nature, awakened and cultivated by our own appeal to the mere instinct of brute force, have been naturally directed, in every possible way, to thwart and injure our trade. During the latter half of the French revolutionary wars, England, owing to successive victories, became the mistress of the ocean; her flag floated triumphantly over every navigable parallel of latitude, and her merchants and manufacturers commanded a monopoly of the markets of the globe. For a period of more than ten years an enemy's ship was scarcely to be seen, unless as a fugitive from the thunder of our vessels of war; no neutrals were allowed to pass along that thoroughfare of nations, the ocean, without submitting to pay the homage to British power of undergoing the humiliation of a search by our cruisers. There was something inconceivably flattering to the vulgar mind in this exhibition of successful violence. Our naval supremacy, consequently, became the theme and watchword of all those orators, statesmen, and writers who had an interest in perpetuating the war. Poets, too, were put in requisition; and a thousand songs, all breathing such sentiments as "Rule Britannia," were heard in the theatres, taverns, and streets. Cupidity, as well as pride, was appealed to. Our merchants were continually reminded, by the minister and his minions, that they alone possessed the markets of the world; *and, even whilst our yearly national expenditure reached nearly double the amount of the whole of our exports*, such was the intoxication, such the infatuation of the moment, owing to the gross appeals made to national vanity, that the multitude were not only impressed with the belief that our commerce was profitable, but convinced that England was destined to remain permanently



the same trading monopolist. Peace cured us of this maddening fever; but, in exchange, it brought the lumbago or debt, which still oppresses and torments our body politic. Not only this; the moral is yet to follow. The brute force which we had exercised towards foreign nations, at sea, during the war, had naturally excited the animal feelings of hatred, fear, and revenge, in return. Every country began to establish manufactures, in order to become independent of and secure against Great Britain. Russia, Austria, and France, now commenced the war of interdicts; and Ferdinand of Spain\* had no sooner succeeded in re-establishing the Inquisition, than he—for whom, to the everlasting infamy of that epoch of our history, the blood and treasure of England were squandered—repaid us with a prohibition of our cottons.

We cannot give proofs of the motives which actuate the

\* Our former intervention in the concerns of Spain was characterised by wisdom itself when compared with the unadulterated folly of the part we are at present taking in Peninsular affairs. Here is a family quarrel, between two equally worthless personages, who dispute the right of reigning over ten millions of free people; and England sends a brigade of *four or five thousand men (by what right?)* to decide this purely domestic question! We have been informed, by a friend long resident in Spain, upon whose authority we can rely, that there is not an honest public functionary in the country; that, from the Minister down to the lowest tide-waiter, all are as corrupt now as when Wellington censured the treachery of this people. Villiers and Evans are experiencing that treatment, at the hands of Isturiez and Cordova, which Frere and Sir John Moore encountered, thirty years ago, from the agents of the Government. That the *people* are not improved by our last sacrifices for the dynasty of Ferdinand may be proved by their atrocities and female massacres—unheard of out of Turkey. When the affairs of the British empire are conducted with as much wisdom as goes to the successful management of a private business, the honest interests of our own people will become the study of the British ministry; and then, and not till then, instead of being at the mercy of a chaos of *expedients*, our Foreign Secretary will be guided by the *principle* of non-intervention in the politics of other nations. “A people,” says Channing, “which wants a saviour, which does not possess an earnest and pledge of freedom in its own heart, is not yet ready to be free.” In the meantime, it cannot be too widely known, that our interference in the private quarrels of these semi-barbarians will cost us, this year, half a million sterling; whilst with difficulty we have obtained £10,000 for establishing Normal Schools!

councils of despotic princes, for they furnish none to the world; but the discussions on the tariff laws in France and the United States, which were necessarily public, fully disclosed that the reason which led their governments to seek to become themselves manufacturers, was to render those countries independent of the power of Great Britain at sea. The French nation, which, in 1786 had concluded a treaty of commerce with Great Britain upon terms very favourable to the latter, and which would, had it not been interrupted by war, have consolidated the two countries by a complete identification of interests, long before the period we are now speaking of, proceeded, immediately on the close of hostilities, to prohibit the introduction of every article of our manufacture. The spirit which operated then is still alive, and with the avowal of the self-same motives; for, during the late discussions in the Chamber of Deputies \* upon the revisal of the tariff, a discriminating duty was laid upon the coal coming from this country (by the unprecedented scheme of dividing France into three zones for that very purpose), and it was defended upon the plea of protection against inconvenience during war!

America, however, presents us with the severest lesson, as

\* The ignorance manifested in the French Chamber of Deputies upon commercial affairs, during the recent discussions, and the folly and egotism of the majority of the speakers, leave little hope of an increased intercourse between the two countries. M. Thiers openly avowed that we were to be manufacturing rivals, but political friends: we disclaim both these relationships. The French, whilst they are obliged to prohibit our fabrics from their own market, because their manufacturers cannot, they say, sustain a competition with us, even with a heavy protecting duty, never will become our rivals in third markets, where both will pay alike. The boast of the Prime Minister of France is like the swagger of one, who, having barricaded himself securely in his own house, blusters about giving battle in a neighbouring county. For the English ministry to form a mere political connection with the present unstable government and dynasty of France, to the exclusion of trading objects, would be to put us in partnership with a party in a desperate state of fortune, who resolved not to mend it. There can be no real alliance, unless by a union of interests. Schoolboys have sufficient knowledge of human nature to feel this, when they throw their marbles into a common bag, and become friends.

the moral of that policy which relies upon violence and war for the support or acquisition of commerce. In the report of the committee on manufactures of cotton, presented in the Congress of the United States, February 13, 1816—a paper drawn up with great moderation and delicacy, so far as relates to the allusions to British violence during the war just concluded—it is stated that, “Prior to the years 1806 and 1807, establishments for manufacturing cotton wool had not been attempted but in a few instances, and on a limited scale. Their rise and progress are attributable to embarrassments to which commerce was subjected; which embarrassments originated in causes not within the control of human prudence.” The causes here alluded to are the British orders in council and Bonaparte’s decrees. Then follows a statement of the quantity of cotton wool manufactured at successive periods in the United States :—

1800	.	.	.	.	.	.	500 bales.
1805	.	.	.	.	.	.	1,000 „
1810	.	.	.	.	.	.	10,000 „
1815	.	.	.	.	.	.	90,000 „

And afterwards it goes on to say, in speaking of Great Britain—“No improper motives are intended to be imputed to that government. But does not experience teach a lesson that should never be forgotten, that governments, like individuals, are apt ‘to feel power and forget right’? It is not inconsistent with national decorum to become circumspect and prudent. May not the Government of Great Britain be inclined, in analysing the basis of her political power, to consider and regard the United States as her rival, and to indulge an improper jealousy, the enemy of peace and repose?” And, in proposing on February 12, 1816, a new tariff to the *Senate*, in which cotton goods are subjected to  $33\frac{1}{3}$  per cent. duty, the Secretary of the Treasury, in the course of his report, has this passage :—“But it was emphatically during the period of the restrictive system and of the war that the importance of

domestic manufactures became conspicuous to the nations, and made a lasting impression upon the mind of every statesman and every patriot." It is not, however, by state papers that we can fully estimate the sentiments of the nation at large. Immediately on the cessation of war a strong feeling was manifested in all parts of the Union in favour of protecting the manufactures of the country. This feeling prevailed with the democratic party, which was then in the ascendant, quite as much as with the federalists, although the former had previously been opposed to protecting duties. We cannot better illustrate this than by giving the following extract from a letter, written at this time by the great leader and champion of that party, Jefferson, who, in his "Notes on Virginia," written in 1785, had given his opinion, "that the workshops of Europe are the most proper to furnish the supplies of manufactures to the United States;" but, after the experience of the war, changed his opinion to the following:—"The British interdicted to our vessels all harbours of the globe, without they had at first proceeded to some one of hers, there paid tribute proportioned to their cargo, and obtained a licence to proceed to the port of their destination. Compare this state of things with that of 1785, and say whether an opinion, founded in the circumstances of that day, can be fairly applied to those of the present. We have experienced what we did not then believe, that there does exist both profligacy and power enough to exclude the United States from the field of intercourse with foreign nations. We therefore have a right to conclude, that to be independent for the comforts of life we must fabricate them for ourselves. We must now place the manufacturer by the side of the agriculturist. The question of 1785 is suppressed, or rather assumes a new form. The question is, Shall we manufacture our own comforts, or go without them at the will of a foreign nation? He, therefore, who is now against domestic manufactures, must be for reducing us to a dependence upon foreign nations. *I am not one of these.*

We have illustrated this matter with reference to the United States more clearly than in relation to France, because, as we have elsewhere stated, it is our conviction, after giving considerable attention to the subject, that future danger to our manufacturing and commercial supremacy impends from America rather than from any European nation. It will be seen from the preceding quotations, that from the first independence of that country, the democratic party was inimical to the establishing of protective duties; that party, under Jefferson, then was, and down to this day it continues to be triumphant; and we therefore possess unquestionable evidence that, by the hand of violence of England herself in 1806 and subsequently, the cotton manufacture was planted in the United States; and it may be seen, in the foregoing table, how, watered by the blood of our succeeding ten years' French war, it flourished an hundred and eighty fold! That manufacture is not destined to perish; it now equals the fifth of our own staple industry. We do not predict such a retributive visitation; we are proof against despair, when the energies of our countrymen are the grounds of hope; but if, in consequence of past wastefulness, or future extravagance and misgovernment here, a people beyond the Atlantic, free of debt, resolute in peacefulness, and of severe economy, should wrest, by the victory of "*cheapness*," that main prop of our national prosperity, the cotton manufacture, from our hands—how greatly will it aggravate a nation's sufferings, to remember the bitter historical truth, that that people was goaded to the occupations of the spinning-jenny and the loom by the violence of Great Britain herself!

We mention these facts for the purpose of appealing, on a fresh ground, against the policy of maintaining enormous standing armaments. It has been seen that armies and ships cannot protect or extend commerce; whilst, as is too well known, the expenses of maintaining them oppress and impede our manufacturing industry—two sufficient grounds for reducing both. There is another motive in the above facts. That feel-

ing which was awakened by our overwhelming power at sea, at the conclusion of the war—the feeling of fear and mistrust lest we should be, in the words of the American state paper, just quoted, “apt to feel power and forget right”—is kept alive by the operation of the same cause, which tends still, as we have seen by the last debates in the French Chamber of Deputies, to afford excuses for perpetuating the restrictive duties upon our fabrics. The standing armies and navies, therefore, whilst they cannot possibly protect our commerce—whilst they add, by the increase of taxation, to the cost of our manufactures, and thus augment the difficulty of achieving the victory of “cheapness”—tend to deter rather than attract customers. The feeling is natural; it is understood in the individual concerns of life. Does the shopkeeper, when he invites buyers to his counter, place there, as a guard to protect his stock or defend his salesmen from violence, a gang of stout fellows, armed with pistols and cutlasses?

There is a vague apprehension of danger to our shores experienced by some writers, who would not feel safe unless with the assurance that the ports of England contained ships of war ready at all times to repel an attempt at invasion. This feeling arises from a narrow and imperfect knowledge of human nature, in supposing that another people shall be found sufficiently void of perception and reflection—in short, sufficiently mad—to assail a stronger and richer empire, merely because the retributive injury, thereby inevitably entailed upon themselves, would be delayed a few months by the necessary preparation of the instruments of chastisement. Such are the writers by whom we have been told that Russia was preparing an army of 50,000 men, to make a descent upon Great Britain to subjugate a population of twenty-five millions! Those people do not in their calculations award to mankind even the instinct of self-preservation which is given for the protection of the brute creation. The elephant is not for ever brandishing his trunk, the lion closes his mouth and conceals his claws, and

the deadly dart of the reptile is only protruded when the animal is enraged ; yet we do not find that the weaker tribes—the goats, the deer, or the foxes—are given to assaulting those masters of the forest in their peaceful moods.

If that which constitutes cowardice in individuals, viz., the taking of undue and excessive precautions against danger, merits the same designation when practised by communities—then England certainly must rank as the greatest poltroon among nations. With twenty-five millions of the most robust, the freest, the richest, and most united population of Europe—enclosed within a smaller area than ever before contained so vast a number of inhabitants—placed upon two islands, which, for security, would have been chosen before any spot on earth, by the commander seeking for a *Torres Vedras* to contain his host—and with the experience of seven hundred years of safety, during which period no enemy has set foot upon their shores—yet behold the government of Great Britain maintaining mighty armaments, by sea and land, ready to repel the assaults of imaginary enemies ! There is no greater obstacle to cheap and good government than this feeling of danger, which has been created and fostered for the very purpose of misgovernment.\*

Instead of pandering to this unworthy passion, every journalist and public writer ought to impress upon the people of

\* “ Nothing is worthy of more attention, in tracing the causes of political evil, than the facility with which mankind are governed by their fears, and the degree of constancy with which, under the influence of that passion, they are governed wrong. The fear of Englishmen to see an enemy in their country, has made them do an infinite number of things which had a much greater tendency to bring enemies into their country than to keep them away.

“ In nothing, perhaps, have the fears of communities done them so much mischief as in the taking of securities against enemies. When sufficiently frightened, bad Governments found little difficulty in persuading them that they never could have securities enough. Hence come large standing armies, enormous military establishments, and all the evils which follow in their train. Such are the effects of taking too much security against enemies.”—*Ency. Brit.* New edition. Vol. vii. p. 122.

these realms, that, neither from the side of Russia, nor from any other quarter, is this industrious, orderly, moral, and religious community threatened ; that it is only from decay and corruption within, and not from external foes, that a nation of twenty-five millions of free people—speaking one language, identified by habits, traditions, and institutions, governed by like laws, owning the same monarch, and placed upon an insular territory of less than 100,000 square miles—can ever be endangered. History, as we have before remarked, affords no example of a great empire—such, for instance, as Prussia—consolidated, enlightened, and moral, falling a prey to barbarous invaders. But the British Empire, with more than double the population and twenty times the wealth, possesses in the sea-girt nature of its situation, a thousand times the security of Prussia. To attempt to augment such a measure of safety by oppressive armaments, by land and sea—is it the part of wisdom and prudence, or of improvidence and folly ?

But to return to that course of inquiry from which our argument has slightly swerved. We recur to the subject of protecting our commerce by armed ships ; and it becomes necessary next to examine, whether, even supposing our naval force could defend our trade against the attacks of rivals (which we have conclusively proved it cannot), the cost of its protection does not, in some cases, more than absorb the gain of such traffic. The real or declared value of all the British manufactures and other produce exported to the Mediterranean, including the coast of Africa and the Black Sea, will this year amount to about £9,500,000. Under the groundless plea of protecting this commerce, we find, from the *United Service Journal* of June 1st, that a naval armament, mounting more than 1,300 guns, being upwards of a third of the national force, is stationed within the Straits of Gibraltar. Taking the annual cost of the entire British navy at five millions, if we apportion a third part of this amount, and add the whole cost of the fortifications and garrisons of the Mediterranean, with their



contingents at the war office, ordnance, etc., we shall be quite safe and within the mark, in estimating that our yearly expenditure in guarding the commerce of this sea, amounts to upwards of three millions sterling, or one-third of our exports to those quarters. Now, what kind of a business would a wholesale dealer or merchant pronounce it, were his traveller's expenses, for escort alone, to come to 6s. 8d.\* in the pound on the amount of his sales! Yet this is precisely the unprofitable character of our yearly trade to the Mediterranean. Most people approach the investigation of a nation's affairs with the impression that they do not come under the same laws of common sense and homely wisdom by which private concerns are governed—than which nothing can be more erroneous. America, which carries on a traffic one-half as extensive as Great Britain, with only a sixth† of our navy

\* We shall offer no excuses for so frequently resolving questions of State policy into matters of pecuniary calculation. Nearly all the revolutions and great changes in the modern world have had a financial origin. The exaction of the tenth penny operated far more powerfully than the erection of the Council of Blood to stir the Netherlands into rebellion in 1569 against the tyranny of Charles V. Charles I. of England lost his head in consequence of enforcing the arbitrary tax called ship-money. The independence of America, and indirectly through that event, all the subsequent political revolutions of the entire world, turned upon a duty of threepence a pound, levied by England upon tea imported into that colony. Louis XVI. of France, when he summoned the first assembly of the Estates-General, did so with the declared object of consulting with them upon the financial embarrassments under which his Government was labouring: that was the first of a series of definite changes which eventually cost the king his life, and Europe twenty years of sanguinary wars. The Second French Revolution, in 1830, was begun by the printers, who were deprived of the means of subsistence by the Ordinances of Charles X. against the press. How much of our own Reform Bill was the fruits of a season of distress?

Remembering that to nineteen-twentieths of the people (who never encounter a higher functionary than the tax-gatherer, and who meet their rulers only in duties upon beer, soap, tobacco, etc.) politics are but an affair of pounds, shillings, and pence, we need not feel astonished at such facts as the preceding

† The following is the American navy in commission, February 27, 1836:—One ship of the line, four frigates, eleven sloops, six small vessels; and this after a threatened rupture with France, when every arrival from Europe might have brought a declaration of war! Compare this statement with the fact, that

expenses, and with no charge for maintaining colonies or garrisons, is every year realising a profit to her people beyond that of her extravagant rival, in proportion to her more economical establishments ; just exactly in the same way that the merchant or shopkeeper who conducts his business at a less cost for rent, clerks, etc., will, at each stock-taking, find his balance-sheet more favourable than that of his less frugal competitor. And the result will be in the one case as in the other—that the cheaper management will produce cheaper commodities ; which, in the event, will give a victory, in every market, to the more prudent trader.

But if, instead of the Mediterranean generally, we apply this test to an individual nation situated on that sea, we shall be able to illustrate the matter more plainly. In the same work from which we have before quoted, we find it stated that there are (June 1st) thirteen British ships of war lying at Lisbon, carrying 372 guns ; *a force about equal to the whole American navy*

the British Government, with a force, at the same time, more than six-fold that of the United States, demanded an increase of more than the entire strength of the American navy, and with the same breath avowed the assurance of permanent peace ; and let it be remembered, too, that the House of Commons voted this augmentation, under the pretence of protecting our commerce !

A few plain maxims may be serviceable to those who may in future have occasion to allude to the subject of commerce, in king's speeches, or other state papers.

To make laws for the regulation of trade, is as wise as it would be to legislate about water finding a level, or matter exercising its centripetal force.

So far from large armaments being necessary to secure a regularity of supply and demand, the most obscure province on the west coast of America, and the smallest island in the South Pacific, are, in proportion to their wants, as duly visited by buyers and sellers as the metropolis of England itself.

The only naval force required in a time of peace for the protection of commerce, is just such a number of frigates and small vessels as shall form an efficient sea police.

If government desires to serve the interests of our commerce, it has but one way. War, conquest, and standing armaments cannot aid, but only oppress trade ; diplomacy will never assist it—commercial treaties can only embarrass it. *The only mode by which the Government can protect and extend our commerce, is by retrenchment, and a reduction of the duties and taxes upon the ingredients of our manufactures and the food of our artisans.*

*employed in protecting the interests of that commercial people all over the world!* That part of our annual navy estimates which goes to support this amount of guns, with contingent expenses fairly proportioned, will reach about £700,000. Turning to M'Culloch's Commercial Dictionary (article, Oporto), we find that the declared value of exports of British manufactures and produce to the entire kingdom of Portugal, reached in 1831 (the latest year we have at this moment access to), £975,991. Here then we find, even allowing for increase, the escort costing nearly as much as the amount sold. In a word, Portugal is, at this moment, *paying* us at the rate of £500,000 a year clear and dead loss! Our commerce with that country, on this 1st June, was precisely of the same ruinous character to the British nation as it would be in the case of an individual trader who turned over twenty thousand a year, and whose expenses in clerks, watchmen, rents, etc., were £15,000. If anything could add to the folly of such conduct—conduct which, if proved against an individual brought before an insolvent debtors' tribunal would be enough to consign him to prison—it is, to recollect that no part of such a nautical force can possibly be of the slightest service to our trade with Portugal, which is wholly independent of such coercion. Even our foreign secretary—a functionary who, during the last hundred and fifty years, has travelled abroad for this commercial empire with no other result to the national ledger but eight hundred millions of bad debts—has, we are happy to see, discovered this truth; for, on being questioned by Mr. Robinson in the House,\* as to a recent *grateful* augmentation of duties upon British goods, amounting to 14 per cent., by the Government of Lisbon, our present foreign secretary, Lord Palmerston, avowed that the Portuguese were free to put whatever restraints they chose upon our trade with their country; and he merely threatened, if the tariff was not satisfactory, that he would attack them—how do our readers suppose?—with

\* House of Commons' Report, June 6.

the thunder of our ships in the Tagus?—with soldiers and sailors?—with grape, musketry, shot, shell, and rocket?—all of which we provide for the protection of our commerce? No—with *retaliatory duties*!

To proceed to a worse case. On the 1st June, our naval force, on the West India station (see *United Service Journal*), amounted to 29 vessels, carrying 474 guns, to protect a commerce just exceeding two millions per annum. This is not all. A considerable military force is kept up in those islands, which, with its contingent of home expenses at the War Office, Ordnance Office, etc., must also be put to the debit of the same account. Add to which, our civil expenditure, and the charges at the Colonial Office on behalf of the West Indies; and we find, after due computation, that our whole expenditure, in governing and protecting the trade of those islands, exceeds, considerably, the total amount of their imports of our produce and manufactures. Our case here is no better than that of Jenkins and Sons, or Jobson and Co., or any other firm, whose yearly returns are less than the amount of their expenses for travellers, clerks, etc.; and if the British Empire escapes the ruin which, at the close of the year, must inevitably befall those improvident traders, it is only because we have other markets and resources—the Americas, and Asia, and the productive industry of these islands—to draw upon, to cover the annual loss sustained by our West India *possessions* (?)

Or, for another parallel case, let our readers suppose that a Yarmouth house engaged in the herring trade were to maintain, besides the fishermen who with their boats and nets were employed in catching the fish, as many yachts, full of well-dressed lookers on, as should cost a sum equal to the value of all the herrings caught. That house would, at the end of the year, have sacrificed the whole of the money paid for the labour of the fishermen, besides the interest and wear and tear of the capital in boats, nets, etc. This is precisely the situation of our

commerce with the West Indies at this moment. The British nation—the productive classes—pay in taxation as much in proportion to support well-dressed lookers-on in ships of war, garrisons, and civil offices, as their goods sell for to the West Indians. And, consequently, the whole amount expended for wages and material, together with the wear and tear of machinery, and loss of capital incurred in making cottons, woollens, etc., besides the hire of merchants' ships and seamen to convey the merchandise to market, is irredeemably lost to the tax-payers of this country.\* Here is a plain statement of the case, and in America, where everything is subjected to the test of common sense, the question would be at once determined by such an appeal to the homely wisdom of every-day life. If in that country it could be shown that a traffic between New York and Cuba to the yearly amount of ten millions of dollars was conducted at a cost to the community of the same amount of taxation, it would be put down by one unanimous cry of outraged prudence from Maine to Louisiana. And how long will it be before the policy of the Government of this manufacturing and commercial nation shall be determined by at least as much calculation and regard for self-interest as are necessary to the prosperity of a private business? Not until such time as Englishmen apply the same rules of common sense to the affairs of state that they do to their individual undertakings. We will not stop to inquire of what use are those naval armaments to protect a traffic with our own territory. It is customary, however, to hear our standing army and navy defended as necessary for the protection of our

\* We invite the attention of public-spirited members of Parliament to these facts. They are submitted for the investigation of the conductors of the newspaper press. Every Chamber of Commerce in the kingdom is interested in the subject. This is not a question of party politics, but of public business. Every prudent trader must feel outraged at such a display of reckless extravagance by a commercial people; nay, every economical labourer and frugal housewife must be scandalised by this wasteful misdirection of the industry of the state.

colonies, as though some other nation might otherwise seize them. Where is the *enemy* (?) that would be so good as to steal such *property*? We should consider it to be quite as necessary to arm in defence of our national debt!

Enough has been said to prove that even if armaments for the protection of commerce could effect the object for which they are maintained (although we have shown the false pretensions of the plea of defending our trade), still the cost of supporting these safeguards may often be greater than the amount of profit gained. This argument applies more immediately to Turkey and the East, upon which countries a share of public attention has lately been bestowed far beyond the importance of their commerce.\* It would be difficult to apportion the precise quota of our ships of war, which may be said to be at this moment maintained with a view to support

\* Pitt, whose views of commercial policy were, at the commencement of his career, before he was drawn into the vortex of war by a selfish oligarchy, far more enlightened and liberal than those of his great political opponents (as witness the opposition by Burke and Fox to his French treaty on the vulgar ground that the two nations were natural enemies), entertained a just opinion of the comparative unimportance of the trade of the east of the Mediterranean, after the growth of our cotton manufactures and the rise of the United States had given a new direction to the great flood of traffic.

"Of the importance of the Levant trade," said Mr. Pitt (see *Hansard's Par. Hist.* vol. xxxvi., p. 59), "much had formerly been said, volumes had been written upon it, and even nations had gone to war to obtain it. The value of that trade, even in the periods to which he had alluded, had been much exaggerated; but even supposing those statements to have been correct, they applied to times when the other great branches of our trade to which we owe our present greatness and our naval superiority did not exist—he alluded to the great increase of our manufactures, to our great internal trade, to our commerce with Ireland, with the United States of America. It was these which formed the sinews of our strength, and compared with which the Levant trade was trifling." This was spoken in 1801, since which time our trade with the United States has increased threefold, and by the emancipation of South American colonies, another continent of still greater magnitude offers us a market which throws by its superior advantages those of the Levant and Turkey into comparative insignificance, and adds proportionably to the force of the argument in the above quotation. Yet we have *statesmen* of our day who seem to have scarcely recognised the existence of America,

our influence or carry into effect the views of our Foreign Secretary in the affairs of Constantinople. The late augmentation of the navy—the most exceptionable vote which has passed a reformed House of Commons—although accomplished by the Ministry without explanation of its designs, further than the century-old pretence of protecting our commerce,\* was generally believed to have been aimed at Russia in the Black Sea. Our naval force in the East was considerable previously; but taking only the increase into calculation, it will cost more than three times the amount of the current profits of our trade with Turkey, whilst it can show no prospective benefits, since, even if we possessed Constantinople ourselves, we should only be able to command its trade by selling, as at Gibraltar, cheaper than other people. Our nautical establishments devoted to the (*pretended*) guardianship of British *commercial* interests (for we can have no other description of interests a thousand miles off) in Turkey are, the present year, costing the tax-payers of this country, upon the lowest computation, more than three times the amount of the annual profit of our trade with that country. Not content with this state of things, which leaves very little chance of future gain, some writers and speakers

\* Two letters have since been published in the *Manchester Guardian*, May 28, which are written by Lord Durham and addressed to Mr. Gisborne, the British Consul at Petersburg, giving the most positive assurances that no interruption will take place in our friendly commercial relations with Russia. Will the navy be reduced? We may apply the lines of Gay, written upon standing armies a century ago, to sailors—

“Soldiers are perfect devils in their way—

When once they're raised they're deuced hard to lay.”

Apropos of soldiers. In 1831, during the progress of the Reform Bill, and when the country was upon the eve of a new election, in which, owing to the excitement of the people, tumults were justly to be dreaded, an augmentation of the army to the extent of 7,680 men was voted by the Parliament. Mr. Wynn, the then War Secretary, declared that this increase had no reference to continental affairs. He should be rejoiced, he said, if the causes which led to this augmentation should cease and enable the Government to reduce the estimates before the end of three months. *No reduction yet—1836!* Where is Mr. Hume?



would plunge us into a war with Russia, in defence of Turkey, for the purpose of protecting this commerce, the result of which would inevitably be, as in former examples of wars undertaken to defend Spain or Portugal, that such an accumulation of expenses would ensue as to prevent the possibility of the future profit upon our exports to the Ottoman empire even amounting to so much as should discharge the yearly interest of the debt contracted in its behalf.

We had intended and were prepared to give a summary of the wars, their causes and *commercial* consequences, in which Great Britain has been during the last century and a half from time to time engaged ; but we are admonished that our limited space will not allow us to follow out this design. It must suffice to offer as the moral of the subject, that although the conflicts in which this country has during the last 150 years involved itself have, as Sir Henry Parnell\* has justly remarked, in almost every instance been undertaken in behalf of our commerce, yet we hesitate not to declare that there is no instance recorded in which a favourable tariff or a beneficial commercial treaty has been extorted from an unwilling enemy at the point of the sword. On the contrary, every restriction that embarrasses the trade of the whole world, all existing commercial jealousies between nations, the debts that oppress the countries of Europe, the incalculable waste owing to the mis-directed labour and capital of communities, these and a thousand other evils that are now actively thwarting and oppressing commerce are all the consequences of wars. How shall a profession which withdraws from productive industry the ablest of the human race, and teaches them systematically the best modes of destroying mankind, which awards honours only in proportion to the number of victims offered at its sanguinary altar, which overturns cities, ravages farms and vineyards, uproots forests, burns the ripened harvest, which, in a word, exists but in the absence of law, order, and security—

\* "Financial Reform."



how can such a profession be favourable to commerce, which increases only with the increase of human life, whose parent is agriculture, and which perishes or flies at the approach of lawless rapine? Besides, they who propose to influence by force the traffic of the world, forget that affairs of trade, like matters of conscience, change their very nature if touched by the hand of violence; for as faith, if forced, would no longer be religion, but hypocrisy, so commerce becomes robbery if coerced by warlike armaments.\* If, then, war has in past times in no instance served the just interests of commerce, whilst it has been the sole cause of all its embarrassments; it for the future, when trade and manufactures are brought under the empire of "cheapness," it can still less protect, whilst its cost will yet more heavily oppress it; and having seen that if war could confer a golden harvest of gain upon us instead of this unmixt catalogue of evils it would still be not profit, but plunder; having demonstrated these truths, surely we may hope to be spared a repetition of the mockery offered to this commercial empire at the hands of its government and legislature in the proposal to protect our commerce *by an increase of the Royal navy!* On behalf of the trading world an indissoluble alliance is proclaimed with the cause of peace, and if the unnatural union be again attempted of that daughter of Peace, Commerce, whose path has ever been strewn with the choicest gifts of religion, civilisation, and the arts, with the demon of carnage, War, loaded with the maledictions of widows and orphans, reeking with the blood of thousands of millions† of victims, with feet fresh from the smoking ruins of cities, whose

\* "To me it seems that neither the obtaining nor the retaining of any trade, however valuable, is an object for which men may justly spill each other's blood; that the true and sure means of extending and securing commerce is the goodness and cheapness of commodities; and that the profit of no trade can ever be equal to the expense of compelling it and of holding it by fleets and armies."—*Franklin's letter to Lord Howe, quoted in Hughes' History of England*, vol. xv., p. 254.

† Burke, in his first production—*A Vindication of Natural Society*—sums up his estimate of the loss of human life, by all the wars of past ages, at seventy

ears delight in the groans of the dying, and whose eyes love to gloat upon the dead, if such an unholy union be hereafter proposed, as the humblest of the votaries of that commerce which is destined to regenerate and unite the whole world, we will forbid the banns.

It was our intention, had space permitted it, to have proved, from facts which we had prepared for the purpose, that no class or calling, of whatever rank in society, has ever derived substantial or permanent advantage from war. The agriculturist, indeed, might be supposed to be interested in that state of things which yielded an augmentation of price for his produce, and so he might if hostilities were constant and eternal. But war is at best but a kind of intermittent fever, and the cure or death of the patient must at some time follow. This simile may be justly applied to the condition of the farmer during the French wars and subsequently, at which former period, exposed to the effects of the bank restriction, of enormous loans, and of paper issues, the pulsation of prices sometimes alternated biennially, with dreadful consequences to the *febrile* sufferer, the agriculturist. What management or calculation on the part of the farmer could be proof against such fluctuations in the market, arising from continental battles or the violence or wickedness of a powerful and corrupt government as we find when wheat, which in 1798 averaged £2 10s. 3d. a quarter, had in 1800 reached £5 13s. 7d., and again sold in 1802 at £3 7s. 5d., a state of things which exposed the capitalist and the adventurer, the prudent man and the gambler, to one common fate of suffering and ruin? The dull and, to many, fatal peace brought a state of convalescence more intolerable than the excitement of war. After more than twenty years of this latter species of suffering the invalid is times the population of the globe. It is not a little lamentable to reflect that this great genius, among other *inconsequential* acts of his life, afterwards contributed more than any other individual to fan the flame of the French revolutionary wars, in which several millions more were added to his dismal summary of the victims of "*glory*." (?)

even now scarcely cured. Will he permit his wounds to be re-opened merely that he may again undergo the self-same healing process? But the great majority of agriculturists, the labourers, so far from deriving any advantages from it, suffered grievously from the effects of that war which is sometimes excused or palliated on account of the pretended benefits it conferred upon the "landed interest."

Whilst the prices of every commodity of food and clothing were rising, in consequence of the depreciation of the currency and other causes incidental to the state of war, the labourers' earnings continued pretty much the same. The consequence was that bread sometimes became a luxury, as is now the case in Ireland, too dear for the English husbandman's resources; that the cruel salt-tax interposed a barrier between him and that necessary of life which frequently compelled him, when providing his winter's stock of provisions, to exchange one half of his pig for the means of curing the other; that good beer rose to a price nearly as prohibitory to the peasant's palate as port wine; and that, owing to the high cost of clothing, he possessed little more change of habiliments than the Russian serf of the present day. What greater proof can be required that war prices conferred no blessings upon the husbandmen than is afforded in the fact that the poor rates were the heaviest in the agricultural districts at a time when wheat was at its highest market price? In a word, at no period were the peasantry of this country enjoying so great an amount of comforts as they possess at this time, and the primary cause of which is the twenty years' duration of peace.

Had we space to enter upon the statistics of our trade and manufactures, it would be easily shown, by an appeal to a comparison of the bankruptcies in times of peace and war; by reference to the past and present condition of our manufacturing districts, as exemplified in the relative amounts of the poor rate, crime, and turbulence among the working classes; and in the comparative prosperity of the capitalists and employers—that these

vital interests have no solid prosperity excepting in a time of peace. We feel that there is little necessity for enlarging upon this point : the manufacturing population do not require to be informed that they can derive no benefit from wars. So firmly are they convinced of the advantages of peace, that we venture to affirm in the behalf of every thinking man of this the most important body in the kingdom (in reference to our external and commercial policy), that they will not consent to a declaration of war in defence of the trade of Turkey,\* or for any any other object, except to repel an act of aggression upon ourselves.

A very small number of the ship-owners—men who are sufficiently old to be able to look back to the time when the British navy swept the seas of their rivals—entertain an indistinct kind of hope that hostilities would, by putting down competition, again restore to them a monopoly of the ocean. This impression can only exist in minds ignorant altogether of the changes which have taken place in the world since the time when the celebrated Orders in Council were issued, thirty years ago. The United States, containing twice the population of that period, and the richest inhabitants in the world, with a mercantile marine second in magnitude only to our own, and with a government not only disburthened of debt, but inconveniently loaded with surplus riches—the United States will never again submit, even for a day, to tyrannical mandates levelled against their commerce at the hands of a British cabinet. The first effects, then, of another European

\* At a meeting of a literary society, of which the author is a member, the subject of discussion lately was—"Would, or would not, the interests of the civilised world, and those of England in particular, be promoted by the conquest of Turkey by Russia?" Which, after an interesting debate on the part of a body of as intelligent individuals as can be found in a town more deeply interested in the question than any in the kingdom, was decided *affirmatively*. The assumed possession was alone considered as affecting the interests of society. The morality of the aggression was not the question entertained, and, therefore, did not receive the sanction of the society.

war, in which England shall become unwisely a party, must be that America will profit at our expense, by grasping the carrying trade of Europe; and the consequences which would, in all probability, ultimately follow, are, that the manufacturing and trading prosperity of this empire will pass into the hands of another people—the due reward of the peaceful wisdom of their government, and the just chastisement of the warlike policy of our own.

We are, then, justified in the assertion that no class or calling of society can derive permanent benefit from war. Even the aristocracy, which, from holding all the offices of the State, profited exclusively by the honours and emoluments arising from past hostilities, would derive no advantages from future conflicts. The governing power is now wholly transferred to the hands of the middling class; and, although time may be necessary to develop all the effects of this complete subversion of the former dominant influence, can any one for a moment doubt that one of its consequences will be to dissipate among that more numerous, but now authoritative class, those substantial fruits of power, the civil and military patronage, which, under the self-same circumstances, were previously enjoyed exclusively by the aristocracy? The electors of the British empire are much too numerous a body to possess interests distinct from those of the rest of their countrymen; and, as the nation at large can never derive advantages from war, we regard the Reform Bill, which has virtually bestowed upon the ten-pounders of this country the guardianship of the Temple of Janus, to be our guarantee for all future time of the continuance of peace.

Before concluding, let us, in a very few words, recur to the subject more immediately under consideration. It has been customary to regard the question of the preservation of Turkey, not as an affair admitting of controversy, but as one determined by the wisdom of our ancestors; and the answer given by Chatham, that “with those who contended we had no

interest in preserving Turkey he would not argue," may probably be quoted to us. The last fifty years have, however, developed secrets for the guidance of our statesmen, which, had that great man lived to behold them, *he* would have profited by ; *he*, at least, would not view this matter through the spectacles of his grandfather, were *he* now presiding at the helm of the state, and surrounded by the glare of light which our past unprofitable wars, the present state of the trade of the colonies, and the preponderating value of our commerce with free America,\* throw around the question of going to war in defence of a nook of territory more than a thousand miles distant, *and over which we neither possess nor pretend to have any control*. That question must now be decided solely by reference to the interests of the people of this country at this present day, which we have proved are altogether on the side of peace and neutrality. Our inquiry is not as to the morality or injustice of the case—that is not an affair between Russia and ourselves, but betwixt that people and the Great Ruler of all nations ; and we are no more called upon by any such considerations to wrest the attribute of vengeance from the Deity, and deal it forth upon the northern aggressor, than we are to preserve the peace and good behaviour of Mexico, or to chastise the wickedness of the Ashantees.

It has been no part of our object to advocate the *right* of Russia to invade Turkey or any other state ; nor have we sought to impart too favourable a colouring to our portraiture of the government or people of the former empire ; but what nation can fail to stand out in a contrast of loveliness, when relieved by the dark and loathsome picture which the Ottoman territory presents to the eye of the observer ? It ought not to

\* It will be apparent to any inquiring mind, which takes the trouble to investigate the subject, that our commerce with America is, at this time, alone sustaining the wealth and trade of these realms. Our colonies do not pay for the expenses of protecting and governing them ; leaving out of the question the interest of the debt contracted in conquering them. Europe has been a still more unprofitable customer.

be forgotten that Russian civilisation (such as it is at this day) is a gain from the empire of barbarism ; that the population of that country, however low its condition may now be, was, at no former period, so prosperous, enlightened, or happy, as now ; and that its rapid increase in numbers is one of the surest proofs of a salutary government : whilst, on the other side, it must be remembered that Mahometanism has sat, for nearly four centuries, as an incubus upon the fairest and most renowned regions of the earth ; and has, during all that period, paralysed the intellectual and moral energies of the noblest portion of the human species ; under whose benumbing sway those countries which, in former ages produced Solomon, Homer, Longinus, and Plato, have not given one poetic genius or man of learning to the world—beneath which the arts have remained unstudied by the descendants of Phidias and Praxiteles ; whilst labour has ceased where Alexandria, Tyre, and Colchis formerly flourished, and the accumulation of wealth is unknown in the land where Croesus himself once eclipsed even the capitalists of the modern world.\* If we refer to the criterion afforded by the comparison of numbers, we shall find in the place of the overflowing population which, in former ages poured out from these regions to colonise the rest of the world, nothing but deserted wastes and abandoned cities ; and the spectacle of the inhabitants of modern Turkey melting away, whilst history and the yet existing ruins of empires attest the richness and fertility of its soil, affords incontestable proof of the destructive and impoverishing character of the government of Constantinople.

\* It is a saying of Montesquieu that " God Almighty must have intended Spain and Turkey as examples to show to the world what the finest countries may become when inhabited by slaves." Yet these two nations are now the objects of British protection, and the source of considerable annual expenditure to the people of these realms ; whilst the *statu quo* of Turkey seems to be the aim of our politicians. In speaking of the cost of our interference in Spain, we assume (safely enough) that the loan of arms by the British Government will not be repaid.

Our object, however, in vindicating Russia from the attacks of prejudice and ignorance, has not been to transfer the national hatred to Turkey, but to neutralise public feeling, by showing that our only wise policy—nay, the only course consistent with the instinct of self-preservation—is to hold ourselves altogether independent of and aloof from the political relations of both these remote and ‘comparatively barbarous nations. England, with her insular territory, her consolidated and free institutions, and her civilised and artificial condition of society, ought not to be, and cannot be, dependent for safety or prosperity upon the conduct of Russia or Turkey; and she will not, provided wisdom governs her counsels, enter into any engagements so obviously to the disadvantage of her people, as to place the peace and happiness of this empire at the mercy of the violence or wickedness of two despotic rulers over savage tribes more than a thousand miles distant from our shores.

“While the Government of England takes ‘peace’ for its motto, it is idle to think of supporting Turkey,” \* says one of the most influential and active *agitators* in favour of the policy of going to war with Russia. In the name of every artisan in the kingdom, to whom war would bring the tidings, once more, of suffering and despair; in the behalf of the peasantry of these islands, to whom the first cannon would sound the knell of privation and death; on the part of the capitalists, merchants, manufacturers, and traders, who can reap no other fruits from hostilities but bankruptcy and ruin; in a word, for the sake of the vital interests of these and all other classes of the community, we solemnly protest against Great Britain being plunged into war with Russia, or any other country, in defence of Turkey—a war which, whilst it would inflict disasters upon every portion of the community, could not bestow a permanent benefit upon any class of it; and one upon our success in which no part of the civilised world would have cause to rejoice.

\* “England, France, Russia, and Turkey.”



Having the *interests* of all orders of society to support our argument in favour of peace, we need not dread war. *These*, and not the piques of diplomatists, the whims of crowned heads, the intrigues of ambassadors, or schoolboy rhetoric upon the balance of power, will henceforth determine the foreign policy of our government. That policy will be based upon the *bonâ fide* principle (not Lord Palmerston's principle) of *non-intervention in the political affairs of other nations*; and from the moment this maxim becomes the load-star by which our government shall steer the vessel of the state—from that moment the good old ship Britannia will float triumphantly in smooth and deep water, and the rocks, shoals, and hurricanes of foreign war are escaped for ever.

If it be objected, that this selfish policy disregards the welfare and improvement of other countries—which is, we cordially admit, the primary object of many of those who advocate a war with Russia, in defence of Turkey, and for the restoration of Poland—we answer, that, so far as the objects we have in view are concerned, we join hands with nearly every one of our opponents. Our desire is to see Poland happy, Turkey civilised, and Russia conscientious and free; it is still more our wish that these ameliorations should be bestowed by the hands of Britain upon her less instructed neighbours: so far the great majority of our opponents and ourselves are agreed; *how* to accomplish this beneficent purpose is the question whereon we differ. They would resort to the old method of trying, as Washington Irving says, “to promote the good of their neighbours, and the peace and happiness of the world, by dint of the cudgel.” Now, there is an unanswerable objection to this method: experience is against it; it has been tried for some thousands of years, and has always been found to fail. But, within our own time, a new light has appeared which has penetrated our schools and families, and illuminated our prisons and lunatic asylums, and which promises soon to pervade all the institutions and relations of social life. We allude to that principle

which, renouncing all appeals, through brute violence, to the mere instinct of fear, addresses itself to the nobler and far more powerful qualities of our intellectual and moral nature. This principle — which, from its very nature as a standard, tends to the exaltation of our species, has abolished the use of the rod, the fetters, the lash, and the strait-waistcoat, and which, in a modified degree, has been extended even to the brute creation, by substituting gentleness for severity in the management of horses\* and the treatment of dogs — this principle we would substitute for the use of cannon and musketry in attempting to improve or instruct other communities. In a word, our opponents would “promote the good of their neighbours by dint of the cudgel :” we propose to arrive at the same end by means of our own national example. *Their* method, at least, cannot be right ; since it assumes that they are at all times competent to judge of what is good for others—which they are not : whilst, even if they were, it would be still equally wrong ; for they have not the jurisdiction over other states which authorises them to do them even good by force of arms. If so, the United States and Switzerland might have been justified, during the prodigal reign of George IV., in making an economical crusade against England, for the purpose of “cudgelling” us out of *our* extravagance and into *their* frugality, which, no doubt, would have been doing good to a nation of debtors and spendthrifts ; instead of which, those countries persevered in their peaceful example. And we have seen the result : Swiss economy has enabled its people to outvie us in cheapness, and to teach us a lesson of frugal industry on our own fortress of Gibraltar. It is thus that the virtues of nations operate both by example and precept : and such is the power and rank they confer, that vicious communities, like the depraved individual, are

\* See the volume on *The Horse*, published by the *Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge*, for the stress laid upon the superiority of mild treatment in the breaking of that animal,

compelled to reform, or to lose their station in the scale of society. States will all turn moralists, in the end, in self-defence.

Apply this principle to Russia, which we will suppose had conquered Turkey. Ten years at least of turbulence and bloodshed would elapse before its fierce Mahometan inhabitants submitted to their Christian invaders, which period must be one of continued exhaustion to the nation. Suppose that at the end of that time those plundered possessions became tranquillised, and the government, which had been impoverished by internal troubles, began to reflect and to look abroad for information as to the course of policy it should pursue. England, which had wisely remained at peace, pursuing its reforms and improvements, would, we have a right to assume, present a spectacle of prosperity, wealth, and power which invariably reward a period of peace. Can there be a doubt that this *example* of the advantages to be derived from labour and improvement over those accruing from bloodshed and rapine, presented in the happiness of the peaceful and the misery of the warlike nation, would determine the future career of Russia in favour of industry and commerce? The mere instinct of self-love and self-preservation must so decide. Had England and all Europe been plunged in war to prevent Russia from effecting her conquest there would have been no such *example* of the fruits and blessings of peace at the close of hostilities as we have here supposed her to present.

The influence which *example* has exerted over the conduct of nations—more potent and permanent than that of the “cudgel”—might form in itself the subject of a distinct and interesting inquiry. It should not be confined to the electric effects of state convulsions, which shock simultaneously the frame of neighbouring empires. The tranquil and unostentatious educational reforms in Switzerland, the temperance societies of America, and the railroads of England, exercise a sway as certain, however gradual, over the imitativeness of the whole world as the “glorious” three days of France or the

triumph of the Reform Bill. But however interesting the topic, our space does not allow us to pursue it further. Yet even whilst we write a motion is making in the House of Commons for a committee to inquire into the mode in which the American Government disposes of its waste lands. A Swiss journal informed us the other day that at a recent meeting of the *Vorort* of that country, a member called for a municipal reform measure similar to the English Corporation Act; and in a Madrid journal which is now before us the writer recommends to the ministers of police a plan for numbering and lettering the watchmen of that metropolis in imitation of the new police of London. Such is *example* in a time of peace.

One word at parting between the author and the reader. This pamphlet, advocating peace, economy, and a moral ascendancy over brute violence, as well as deprecating national antipathies, has, as our excellent and public-spirited publisher will vouch, been written without the slightest view to notoriety or gain (what fame or emolument can accrue from the anonymous publication of an eightpenny work?), and we therefore run no risk of invidious misconception if, in taking leave of our readers, we do so, not with the usual bow of ceremony, but after a fashion of our own. In a word, as trade, and not authorship, is our proper calling, they will, we hope, excuse our attempting to make a bargain with them before we part. And, first, for that very small portion of our friends who will only step out of their way to do an acceptable act provided good and sufficient claims be established against them: they will compel us, then, to remind them that this petty production (which we frankly admit reveals nothing new) contains as much matter as might have been printed in a volume, and sold at above ten times its charge; and, therefore, if those aforesaid customers approve the quality of the article, indifferent as it is, our terms of sale are that they lend this pamphlet to at least six of their acquaintances for perusal. This is the amount of our demand, and as we are dealing with "*good*" men we

shall book the debt with the certainty that it will be duly paid.

But by far the larger portion of our readers will be of that class who, in the words of Sterne, do good "they know not why and care not wherefor." To them we say, "If in the preceding pages you discover a sincere, however feeble, attempt to preserve peace and put down a gigantic national prejudice, an honest though humble resistance to the false tenets of glory, an ardent but inadequate effort, by proving that war and violence have no unison with the true interests of mankind to emancipate our moral and intellectual nature from the domination of the mere animal propensity of combativeness; if, in a word, you see sound views of commerce, just principles of government, freedom, improvement, morality, justice, and truth, anxiously, and yet all ineffectively advocated, then, and not otherwise, recommend this trifle to your friends, place it in the hands of the nearest newspaper editors, and bring it in every way possible before the eye of the public; and do this, not for the sake of the author or the merit of his poor production, but that other and more competent writers may be encouraged to take up with equal zeal and far greater ability the same cause, which we religiously believe is the cause of the best interests of humanity."

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#### AUTHOR'S NOTE.

THE circumstance of each of the preceding chapters having been stereotyped as soon as written precludes the insertion of the following words as a note in another and more appropriate part of the pamphlet.

The predominant feeling entertained with reference to Russia, and the one which has given birth to the other passions nourished towards her, is that of fear—*fear* of the danger of an irruption of its people into western Europe, and the possibility of another destruction of civilisation at the hands of those semi-barbarous tribes similar to that of ancient Rome by their ancestors. But the Goths and Huns did not extinguish the power

and greatness of the Romans. The latter sunk a prey, not to the force of external foes, but to their own internal vices and corruptions. Those northern nations which invaded that empire, and whom we stigmatise as barbarians, were superior in the manly qualities of courage, fortitude, discipline, and temperance to the Roman people of their day. The Attilas and Alarics were equally superior to their contemporaries, the descendants of the Cæsars, and they did not sweep with the besom of destruction that devoted land until long after the "dark, unrelenting Tiberius, the furious Caligula, the stupid Claudius, the profligate and cruel Nero, the beastly Vitellius, and the timid, inhuman Domitian" had, by exterminating every ancient family of the republic, and extirpating every virtue and every talent from the minds of the people, prepared the way for the terrible punishment inflicted upon them.

Modern Europe bears no resemblance in its moral condition to that of ancient Rome at the time we are alluding to. On the contrary, instead of a tendency towards degeneracy, there is a recuperative principle observable in the progress of reforms and improvements of the modern world which in its power of regeneration give ground for hope that the present and future ages of refinement will escape those evils which grew up alongside the wealth and luxury of ancient States, and ultimately destroyed them.

But the application of the power of chemistry to the purposes of war furnishes the best safeguard against the future triumph of savage hordes over civilised communities. Gunpowder has for ever set a barrier against the irruption of barbarians into western Europe. War without artillery and musketry is no longer possible, and these cannot be procured by such people as form the great mass of the inhabitants of Russia. Such is the power which modern inventions in warfare confer upon armies of men, that it is no exaggeration to say that fifty thousand Prussian soldiers, with their complement of field-pieces, rockets, and musketry are more than a match for all the savage warriors who, with their rude weapons, at different epochs ravaged the world from the time of Xerxes down to that of Tamarlane; whilst those countless myriads, without the aid of gunpowder, would be powerless against the smallest of the hundreds of fortified places that are now scattered over Europe. Henceforth, therefore, war is not merely an affair of men, but of men, material, and money.

For some remarks upon the possibility of another irruption of barbarians, see Gibbon's "Rome," ch. 8.

## APPENDIX.

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### EXTRACTS FROM VARIOUS WRITERS, ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE CONDITION OF TURKEY.

INDEED, it was impossible to conceive a more dismal scene of horror and desolation than the Turkish capital now presented. Every day some new atrocities were committed, and the bodies of the victims were either hanging against the doors and walls, or lying without their heads weltering and trampled on in the middle of the streets. At this season flights of kites, vultures, and other unclean birds of prey return after their winter's migration, and, as if attracted by the scent of carcasses, were seen all day wheeling and hovering about, so as to cover the city like a canopy, wherever a body was exposed. By night the equally numerous and ravenous dogs were heard about some headless body, with the most dismal howlings, or snarling and fighting over some skull which they were gnawing and peeling. In fact, all that Byron has feigned of Corinth, or Bruce has described of Abyssinia, or that you have elsewhere read that is barbarous, disgusting, and terrible in Eastern usages was here realised.—*A Residence in Constantinople during the Greek and Turkish Revolutions. By the Rev. R. Walsh, LL.D.*

#### TURKISH DESOLATION.

My way lay along the shores of the Hellespont. The weather had now become moderate, and the storm was succeeded by a balmy sunshine. I cannot describe to you the exquisite beauty of the undulating downs which extend along the Asiatic side of this famous sea; the greensward sloping down to the water's edge, intersected every mile by some sweet-wooded valley running up into the country at one extremity, and terminating in the other by a romantic cove, over whose strand the lucid waves rippled. Here it was that the first picture of Turkish desolation presented itself to me. While those smiling prospects which a good Providence seems to have formed for the delight of man invite him to fix his dwelling among them, all is desert and desolate as the prairies of the Missouri. In a journey of nearly fifteen miles along the coast, and for half the length of the Hellespont, I did not meet a single human habitation, and this in the finest climate, the most fertile soil, and once the most populous country in the world.—*Walsh.*

A victory obtained at Patras was certified to the Sultan by the very intelligible gazette of a waggon loaded with the ears and noses of the slain, which were exposed in a heap to gratify the feelings of pious Mussulmans. Dr. Walsh went to see this ghastly exhibition, which he thus describes in his *Residence in Constantinople*:—"Here I found, indeed, that the Turks did actually take human features as the Indians take scalps, and the trophies of ears, lips, and noses were no fiction. At each side of the gate were two piles, like small haycocks, formed of every portion of the countenance. The ears were generally perforated and hanging on strings. The noses had one lip and a part of the forehead attached to them; the chins had the other, with generally a long beard. Sometimes the face was cut off whole, and all the features remained together; sometimes it was divided into scraps in all forms of mutilation. It was through these goodly monuments of human glory the Sultan and all his train passed every day, and no doubt were highly gratified by the ghastly aspects they presented; for here they were to remain till they were trampled into the mire of the street. Wherever the heaps were partly trodden down the Turks passed over them with perfect indifference. The features, growing soft by putridity, continually attached themselves to their feet, and frequently a man went off with a lip or a chin sticking to his slippers, which were fringed with human beard as if they were lined with fur. This display I again saw by accident on another occasion, and when you hear of sacks of ears sent to Constantinople you may be sure it is a reality, and not a figure of speech. But you are not to suppose they are always cut from the heads of enemies, and on the particular occasion they are sent to commemorate. The number of Greeks killed at Patras did not exceed perhaps one hundred; but noses, ears, and lips were cut indiscriminately from every skull they could find to swell the amount."

#### GEOGRAPHY AND THE USE OF THE GLOBES.

Lord Strangford sent the Porte a valuable present. He had brought with him a pair of very large globes from England, and as the Turks had latterly shown some disposition to learn languages, he thought it would be a good opportunity to teach them something else, and he determined to send them over to the Porte, and asked me to go with them and explain their object. . . . This important present was brought over with becoming respect. A Choreash went first with his bâton of office, then followed two Janissaries, like Atlases, bearing worlds upon their shoulders, then myself, attended by our principal dragoman in full costume, and finally a train of Janissaries and attendants. When arrived at the Porte we were introduced to the *Reis Effendi*, or Minister for Foreign Affairs, who with other ministers were waiting for us. When I had the globes



put together on their frames they came round us with great interest, and the Reis Effendi, who thought, *ex officio*, he ought to know something of geography, put on his spectacles and began to examine them. The first thing that struck them was the compass in the stand. When they observed the needle always kept the same position they expressed great surprise, and thought it was done by some interior mechanism. It was midday, and the shadow of the frame of the window was on the floor. I endeavoured to explain to them that the needle was always found nearly in that direction, pointing to the north. I could only make them understand that it always turned towards the sun! The Reis Effendi then asked me to show him England. When I pointed out the small comparative spot on the great globe he turned to the rest and said "Keetchuk" (little), and they repeated all round "Keetchuk," in various tones of contempt. But when I showed them the dependencies of the empire, and particularly the respectable size of India, they said "Beeyuk" with some marks of respect. I also took occasion to show them the only mode of coming from thence to Constantinople by sea, and that a ship could not sail with a cargo of coffee from Mocha across the Isthmus of Suez. The newly appointed dragoman of the Porte, who had been a Jew, and was imbued with a slighter tincture of information, was present, so after explaining to him as much as I could make him comprehend, I left to him the task of further instructing the ministers in this new science. Indeed, it appeared to me as if none of them had ever seen an artificial globe before, or even a mariner's compass.—*Walsh's Constantinople.*

It has been often remarked that the Turks are rather encamped than settled in Europe. Far from improving the countries they govern, they scathe everything that comes within their reach, they destroy monuments but build none, and when at length they are driven out by the chances of war or revolution, the only traces they leave of their sway are to be found in the desolation with which they everywhere encompass themselves. They may be compared to a flight of locusts eating up and destroying whatever they alight upon, conferring no benefits in return, and at last, when swept from the face of the earth by some kindly blast, only remembered from the havoc they have committed.—*Encyclopædia Britannica, new edition, vol. iv., p. 129.—Art. ATHENS.*

The barbarous anarchic despotism of Turkey, where the finest countries in the most genial climate in the world are wasted by peace more than any countries have been worried by war, where arts are unknown, where manufactures languish, where science is extinguished, where agriculture decays, where the human race itself melts away and perishes under the eye of the observer.—*Burke.*

The following is extracted from a work published in America under the title of *Letters from Constantinople and its Environs by an American,*

and attributed to the pen of Commodore Porter, the United States' *Chargé d'Affaires* at the Sublime Porte :—"At length we discovered, about two miles to the left of our road, a Turkish village, which may always be known by the cypress-trees and the burying-ground, and soon after this an Armenian village, which may be known by the neat cultivation, the fine, shady trees, the mill-race, and an air of primitive patriarchal sort of comfort which seems to be thrown over it. You can, once in a while, see at a distance something like a petticoat moving about, and here are herds of cattle, flocks of sheep, goats, &c. But none of these are visible on your approach to a Turkish town, where all is still and gloomy. Shopkeepers you will find sitting cross-legged, waiting for their customers, too lazy and indolent to rise for the purpose of taking down an article for inspection. It is a truth that I have never seen a Turk buy anything since I have been in the country. They are absolutely too indolent to buy. Neither have I ever seen a Turk work, if there is a possibility of his being idle. I have never seen one stand, if there is a possibility of his being seated. A blacksmith sits cross-legged at his anvil, and seats himself when he shoes a horse. A carpenter seats himself when he saws, bores holes, or drives a nail, planes, dubs with his small adze, or chops with his hatchet (I believe I have named all his tools), if it be possible to do so without standing.

Nothing can be more gloomy than the appearance of things on entering a Turkish village. It is as quiet as the grave; the streets are narrow; the doors all shut and locked; the windows all latticed; not a human being to be seen in the filthy streets. A growling, half-starved dog, or a bitch with her hopeful progeny, which depend for their subsistence on some depository of filth—is all you meet with of animated nature. You proceed through the inhospitable outskirts, despairing of meeting wherewith to satisfy the calls of nature, or a place of shelter, when you at length arrive at perhaps half-a-dozen filthy little shops of six feet square, in each of which you discover a solitary, squatting, silent, smoking Turk. He may glance his eyes at you, but will not turn his head: that would be too much trouble. Now, investigate the contents of these shops, and you will find as follows:—five, or, perhaps, six girths, for pack-horses, made of goats' hair; half-a-dozen halters for horses; fifteen or twenty pounds of rancid Russian butter; a small box containing from one to two pounds of salt, and half a pound of ground pepper. A few bars of curd cheese, looking very like Marseilles soap, not much better in taste, and not so good for digestion. One quart of black salt olives; half a pound of sewing twine, cut into needlefuls; one clothes line; half-a-dozen loaves of brown bread; and two bunches of onions, with a string of garlic. Nine times out of ten, you will find this to be the stock in trade of a Turkish village

shopkeeper : and, over this, in his pitiful box, will he sit and smoke, day after day, without seeing a purchaser, or apparently caring whether one comes or not. If one calls and asks if he has any particular article, his answer is, simply, without raising his eyes, "Yoke." (No.) "Can you inform me where I may procure the article?" "Yoke." It is of no use to try to get anything more out of him. He is as silent as the grave. If he has the article asked for, he hands it to you, and names the price. When the money is laid on the counter, he merely brushes it with his hand through the hole in the till, and then relapses into his former apathy. No compliments, no "thanks for favours received," no "call again if you please." Not the slightest emotion can be discovered. He never raises his eyes to see who his customer is or was ; he sees nothing but the article sold, and the money ; and he would disdain to spend a breath or perform an action that was not indispensable to the conclusion of the bargain. . . . Give a Turk a mat to sleep on, a pipe and a cup of coffee, and you will give him the sum total of all earthly enjoyments.

The magnificent plain of Nice burst on our view. I have often dwelt with pleasure on the recollection of my agreeable surprise, when, descending the mountains at a place (I think) called the Vent of Cordova, the lovely view of the valley of Mexico first presented itself to my astonished sight. No one, I will venture to say, who has travelled from Vera Cruz to Mexico, but recollects the spot I have referred to, and felt as I have felt. Let him recall to his mind the splendour of that scene, and he may then imagine the plain of Nice, in all its fertility and beauty ; not, indeed, so extensive, but more studded with trees, and equally so with villages, and presenting a picture to the eye and the imagination not to be surpassed. But, after a painful descent from our lofty eminence, by a very steep road, we found that, like the plain of Mexico, it was distance that gave to the scenery its principal enchantment. . . . Like Mexico, everything is beautiful in the distance, but nothing will bear examination. View the scene closely, and the charm vanishes. The large and fertile fields are miles from any human habitation ; and, if a solitary being or two happen to be labouring near, you find them covered with rags and vermin. The shepherd, with his numerous flocks and herds, is a half-starved, miserable wretch, covered with filthy sheep-skins, and disgusting to look at. His food, a dry crust, with perhaps an onion. Enter the villages, the streets are almost impassable from filth, and you meet only a ragged, dirty, squalid population of beggars. The noble fields and vineyards are the property of some hungry and rapacious lord, whose interests are confided to a cruel, hard-hearted, and rapacious age. The few in power, revelling in affluence and splendour, have reduced the mass of the people to a degree of misery which appears insupportable. This is Turkey.

EXTRACT FROM LARDNER'S CABINET CYCLOPÆDIA  
(HISTORY OF POLAND).

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LEWIS. 1370—1382.

By yielding to the exorbitant demands of the turbulent and interested nobles—by increasing their privileges, and exempting them from the necessary contributions—he threw a disproportionate burden on the other orders of the State, and promoted that aristocratic ascendancy before which monarch and throne were soon to bow.—P. 101.

HEDWIG. 1382—1386.

The death of Louis was speedily followed by troubles, raised chiefly by the turbulent nobles. Notwithstanding their oaths in favour of Mary and her husband Sigismund—oaths in return for which they had extorted such great concessions—they excluded both, with the design of extorting still greater from a new candidate. Sigismund advanced to claim his rights. A civil war desolated several provinces.—P. 102.

CASIMIR IV. 1445—1492.

Under this monarch aristocracy made rapid progress in Poland. When, on the conclusion of the war he assembled a diet for the purpose of devising means of paying the troops their arrears, it was resolved to resist the demand in a way which should compel him to relinquish it. Hitherto the diets had consisted of isolated nobles, whom the king's summons or their own will had assembled : as their votes were irresponsible and given generally from motives of personal interest or prejudice, the advantage to the order at large had been purely accidental. *Now*, that order resolved to exercise a new and irresistible influence over the executive. As every noble could not attend the diet, yet as every one wished to have a voice in its deliberations, *deputies* were elected to bear the representations of those who could not attend. . . . What in England was the foundation of rational freedom, was in Poland subversive of all order, all good government : in the former country, representation was devised as a check to feudal aristocracy, which shackled both king and nation ; in the latter it was devised by the aristocracy themselves, both to destroy the already too limited prerogatives of the crown, and to rivet the chain of

slavery on the whole nation.—Pp. 121—122. . . . This very diet annulled the humane decree of Casimir the Great, which permitted a peasant to leave his master for ill usage; and enacted that in all cases such peasant might be demanded by his lord; nay, that whoever harboured the fugitive should be visited with a heavy fine. This, and the assumption of judicial authority over their serfs, for peasants they can no longer be called, was a restoration of the worst evils of feudality.—P. 123.

JOHN ALBERT I. 1492—1506.

Evils of a nature still more to be dreaded menaced the murmuring kingdom. Aided by the Turks and Tartars, the Voivode of Wallachia penetrated into Podolia and Polish Russia, the flourishing towns of which he laid in ashes, and returned with immense booty, and 100,000 captives.—P. 125. . . . Under his reign, not only was the national independence in great peril, but internal freedom, the freedom of the agricultural class, was annihilated. At the diet of Petrikaus (held in 1496), the selfish aristocracy decreed that henceforth no citizen or peasant should aspire to the ecclesiastical dignities, which they reserved for themselves alone. The peasantry, too, were prohibited from other tribunals than those of their tyrannical masters: they were reduced to the most deplorable slavery.—P. 127.

ALEXANDER. 1501—1506.

Thus ended a reign more deplorable, if possible, than that of John Albert.—P. 129.

SIGISMUND I. 1506—1548.

He had, however, many obstacles to encounter: neither the patriotism of his views nor the influence of his character could always restrain the restless tumults of his nobles, who, proud of their privileges, and secure of impunity, thwarted his wisest views whenever caprice impelled them. Then the opposition of the high and petty nobility; the eagerness of the former to distinguish themselves from the rest of their order by titles as well as riches; the hostility of both towards the citizens and burghers, whom they wished to enslave as effectually as they had done the peasantry; and, lastly, the fierceness of contention between the adherents of the reformed and old religion, filled his court with factions and his cities with discontent.—P. 136.

INTERREGNUM. HENRY DE VALOIS. 1572—1574.

The death of Sigismund Augustus, the last of the Jagellos, gave the Polish nobles what they had long wanted—the privilege of electing their

monarchs, and of augmenting their already enormous powers by every new *pacta conventa*.\* . . . At first it was expected that the election would be made by deputies only ; but, on the motion of a leading palatine, that, as all nobles were equal in the eye of the law, so all ought to concur in the choice of a ruler, it was carried by acclamation that the assembly should consist of the whole body of the equestrian order—of all, at least, who were disposed to attend. This was another fatal innovation ; a diet of two or three hundred members, exclusive of the senators, might possibly be managed ; but what authority could control 100,000?—Pp. 148—149.

This feeble prince soon sighed for the banks of the Seine ; amidst the ferocious people whose authority he was constrained to recognise, and who despised him for his imbecility, he had no hope of enjoyment. . . . The truth is, no criminal ever longed to flee from his fetters so heartily as Henry from his imperious subjects. . . . His flight was soon made known. . . . A pursuit was ordered ; but Henry was already on the lands of the Empire, before he was overtaken by the grand chamberlian, to whom he presented a ring and continued his journey.—P. 157.

#### STEPHEN. 1575—1586.

After the deposition of Henry, no less than five foreign and two native princes were proposed as candidates for the crown.

During the struggle of Stephen with his rebellious subjects, the Muscovites had laid waste Livonia. To punish their audacity, and wrest from their grasp the conquests they had made during the reign of his immediate predecessor, was now his object. War, however, was more easily declared than made ; the treasury was empty, and the nobles refused to replenish it. Of them it might truly be said, that, while they eagerly concurred in any burdens laid on the other orders of the State—on the clergy and the burghers—those burdens they would not so much as touch with one of their fingers. . . . The Polish nobles were less alive to the glory of their country than to the preservation of their monstrous privileges, which they apprehended might be endangered under so vigilant and able a ruler. . . . However signal the services which this great prince rendered to the republic, he could not escape the common lot of his predecessors—the jealousy, the opposition, and the hatred of a licentious nobility ; nor could he easily quell the tumults which arose among them.—Pp. 158, 160, 161, 165.

\* *Pacta conventa* meant a fresh bargain, which was made by the nobles at every succeeding election of a king, and by which their own powers and privileges were constantly augmented.

## SIGISMUND III. 1586—1632.

As usual, the interregnum afforded ample opportunity for the gratification of individual revenge, and of the worst passions of our nature. The feud between Zborowskis and Zamoyskis was more deadly than ever. Both factions appeared in the field of election, with numerous bodies of armed adherents. The former amounted to 10,000: the latter were less strong in number, but more select.—P. 167. . . . His reign was, as might be expected from his character, disastrous. The loss of Moldavia and Wallachia, of a portion of Livonia, and, perhaps still more, of the Swedish crown for himself, and the Muscovite for his son, embittered his declining years. Even the victories which shed so bright a lustre over his kingdom were but too dearly purchased by the blood and treasure expended. The internal state of Poland, during this period, is still worse. It exhibits little more than his contentions with his nobles, or with his Protestant subjects; and the oppression of the peasants, by their avaricious, tyrannical, and insulting masters—an oppression which he had the humanity to pity, but not the vigour to alleviate.—P. 178.

## ULADISLAS VII. (Vasa.) 1632—1648.

But all the glories of this reign, all the advantages it procured to the republic, were fatally counterbalanced by the haughty and inhuman policy of the nobles towards the Cossacks. In the central provinces of the republic, their unbounded power was considerably restrained in its exercise by their habitual residence among their serfs; but the distant possessions of the Ukraine never saw the face of their rapacious landlords, but were abandoned to Jews, the most unpopular and hateful of stewards. . . . Obtaining no redress from the diet—the members of which, however jealous of their own liberties, would allow none to the people—they had laid their complaints before the throne of the late monarch, Sigismund III. With every disposition, that monarch was utterly powerless to relieve them: Uladislas was equally well-intentioned, and equally unable to satisfy them. On one occasion the latter prince is said to have replied to the deputies from these sons of the wilderness—"Have you no sabres?" Whether such a reply was given them or not, both sabres and lances were speedily in requisition. Their first efforts were unsuccessful. This failure rather enraged than discouraged them; and their exasperation was increased by the annihilation of their religious hierarchy, of their civil privileges, of their territorial revenues, and by their degradation to the rank of serfs—all which iniquities were done by the diet of nobles 1638. Nay, a resolution was taken, at the same time, to extirpate both their faith and themselves, if they showed any disposition to escape the bondage



doomed them. Again they armed, and, by their combination, so imposed on the troops sent to subdue them, that a promise was made them of restoring the privileges which had been so wickedly and so impolitically wrested from them. Such a promise, however, was not intended to be fulfilled; the Cossacks, in revenge, made frequent irruptions into the palatinate of the grand duchy, and no longer prevented the Tartars from similar outrages. Some idea may be formed of the extent of these depredations when it is known that, from the princely domains of one noble alone 30,000 peasants were carried away, and sold as slaves to the Turks and Tartars. Things were in this state, when a new instance of outrageous cruelty, inflicted upon the family of a veteran Cossack, Bogdan Chmielnicki by name—whose valour under the ensigns of the republic was known far beyond the bounds of his nation—spread the flames of insurrection from one end of the Ukraine to the other, and lent fearful force to their intensity. . . . The bolt of vengeance, so long suspended, at length fell. At the head of 40,000 Tartars, and of many times that number of Cossacks, who had wrongs to be redressed as well as he, and whom the tale of *his* had summoned around him with electric rapidity, he began his fearful march. Two successive armies of the republic, which endeavoured to stem the tide of inundation, were utterly swept away by the torrent; their generals and superior officers led away captives, and 70,000 peasants consigned to hopeless bondage.

At this critical moment expired Uladislas—a misfortune scarcely inferior to the insurrection of the Cossacks; for never did a State more urgently demand the authority of such a monarch. Under him the republic was prosperous, notwithstanding her wars with the Muscovites and Turks; and, had his advice been taken, the Cossacks would have remained faithful to her, and opposed an effectual barrier to the incursions of the Tartars. But eternal justice had doomed the chastisement of a haughty, tyrannical, and unprincipled aristocracy, on whom reasoning, entreaty, or remonstrance could have no effect, and whose understandings were blinded by hardness of heart. In their conduct during these reigns there appears something like fatality, which may be explained by a maxim confirmed by all human experience—*Quem Deus vult perdere, prius dementat*.\*—Pp. 182-3-4-5.

#### INTERREGNUM—JOHN CASIMIR. 1698.

Never was *interregnum* more fatal than that which followed the death of Uladislas. The terrible Bogdan, breathing vengeance against the republic, seized on the whole of the Ukraine, and advanced towards Red Russia. He was joined by vast hordes of Tartars from Bessarabia and

\* Those whom God would destroy, He first deprives of reason.



the Crimea, who longed to assist in the contemplated annihilation of the republic. This confederacy of Mussulmans, Socinians, and Greeks, all actuated by feelings of the most vindictive character, committed excesses at which the soul revolts ;—the churches and monasteries were levelled with the ground—the nuns were violated—priests were forced, under the raised poniard, not merely to contract, but to consummate marriage with the trembling inmates of the cloisters, and, in general, both were subsequently sacrificed ; the rest of the clergy were despatched without mercy. But the chief weight of vengeance fell on the nobles, who were doomed to a lingering death ; whose wives and daughters were stripped naked before their eyes ; and, after violation, were whipped to death in sight of the ruthless invaders.—P. 186.

Scarcely an evil can be mentioned which did not afflict the kingdom during the eventful reign of this monarch. To the horrors of invasion by so many enemies must now be added those of domestic strife—P. 196. . . . In this beautiful picture of disasters abroad and anarchy at home—of carnage and misery on every side, the disbanded military now took a prominent part.—P. 197. . . . In short, the reign of this monarch, while it exhibits a continued succession of the worst evils which have afflicted nations, is unredeemed by a single advantage to the republic ; its only distinction is the fearfully accelerated impulse which it gave to the decline of Poland. The fact speaks little either for monarch or diet : but he must not be blamed with undue severity ; his heart was better than his head ; and both were superior to those of the turbulent, fierce, and ungovernable men who composed a body at once legislative and executive.

#### MICHAEL. 1668—1673.

The first act of the diet of nobles was to declare that no Polish king should hereafter abdicate ; the fetters he might assume were thus rendered everlasting.—P. 199. . . . At this time, no less than five armed confederacies were opposed to each other—of the great against the king—of the loyal in his favour—of the army in defence of their chief, whom Michael and his party had resolved to try, as implicated in the French party ; of the Lithuanians against the Poles ; and, finally, of the servants against their masters—the peasants against their lords.—P. 203.

#### JOHN III. (Sobieski.) 1674—1696.

Though he convoked diet after diet, in the hope of obtaining the necessary supplies, diet after diet was dissolved by the fatal veto ; for the same reason, he could not procure the adoption of the many salutary

courses he recommended, to banish anarchy, to put the kingdom on a permanent footing of defence, and to amend the laws.—P. 209.

#### FREDERIC AUGUSTUS. 1696—1733.

Frederic Augustus died early in 1733. His reign was one continued scene of disasters; many of which may be imputed to himself, but more, perhaps, to the influence of circumstances.—P. 225.

#### FREDERIC AUGUSTUS II. 1733—1763.

Though, under Frederic Augustus, Poland entered on no foreign war, his reign was the most disastrous in her annals. While the Muscovite and Prussian armies traversed her plains at pleasure, and extorted whatever they pleased; while one faction openly opposed another, not merely in the diet, but on the field; while every national assembly was immediately dissolved by the veto, the laws could not be expected to exercise much authority. They were, in fact, utterly disregarded; the tribunals were divided, or forcibly overturned, and brute force prevailed on every side. The miserable peasants vainly sought the protection of their lords, who were either powerless or indifferent to their complaints. While thousands expired of hunger, a far greater number sought to relieve their necessities by open depredations. Bands of robbers, less formidable only than the kindred masses congregated under the name of soldiers, infested the country in every direction. Famine aided the devastations of both; the population, no less than the wealth of the kingdom, decreased with frightful rapidity.—P. 232.

#### STANISLAS AUGUSTUS. 1763—1795.

During the few following years, Poland presented the spectacle of a country exhausted alike by its own dissensions and the arms of its enemies. The calm was unusual, and would have been a blessing could any salutary laws have been adopted by the diet. Many such, indeed, were proposed, the most signal of which was the emancipation of the serfs; but the very proposition was received with such indignation by the selfish nobles, that Russian gold was not wanted to defeat the other measures with which it was accompanied—the suppression of the veto, and the establishment of an hereditary monarchy.—P. 242. . . . The republic was thus erased from the list of nations after an existence of near ten centuries. That a country without government (for Poland had none, properly so called, after the extinction of the Jagellos, 1572), without finances, without army, and depending for its existence, year after year, on tumultuous levies, ill-disciplined, ill-armed, and worse paid, should have so long preserved its

independence, in defiance, too, of the powerful nations around, and with a great portion of its own inhabitants, whom ages of tyranny had exasperated hostile to its success—is the most astonishing fact in all history. What valour must that have been, which could enable one hundred thousand men to trample on a whole nation naturally prone to revolt, and bid defiance to Europe and Asia—to Christian and Mussulman, both ever ready to invade the republic!—P. 256.

1793 AND 1853,

*IN THREE LETTERS.*

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“THE passions were excited ; democratic ambition was awakened ; the desire of power under the name of Reform was rapidly gaining ground among the middle ranks, and the institutions of the country were threatened with an overthrow as violent as that which had recently taken place in the French monarchy. In these circumstances, the only mode of checking the evil was by engaging in a foreign contest, by drawing off the ardent spirits into active service, and, in lieu of the modern desire for innovation, rousing the ancient gallantry of the British nation.”—*Alison*, vol. iv., p. 7.

## NOTE.

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MR. COBDEN wrote his pamphlet on Russia mainly to combat the alarm which the supposed policy of that unwieldy empire had excited. It was therefore only natural that, when in 1852-3 the public mind was filled with apprehensions of a French invasion, Mr. Cobden should thoroughly examine the grounds of the panic, and seek to recall the nation to a sense both of what was due to its own dignity and of the misery which could not fail to be provoked by the revival of the ancient distrust and enmity between the two countries. The series of admirable speeches which he delivered at this time will long live in the memory of his countrymen. Mr. Cobden saw a considerable analogy between the epoch of 1793 and that of 1853; for in both the same influences were at work to stimulate the fears of the people, and in both our nearest neighbour was the object of attack. The death of the Duke of Wellington, as well as the elevation of Louis Napoleon to supreme power, contributed to re-awaken the old sentiment of hostility towards France, and therefore, taking a typical sermon on the Iron Duke's death as, to some extent, the text of his pamphlet, Mr. Cobden proceeded to deduce from the authentic history of a former period the lessons which it taught, and to show that whatever might have been the traditions of statesmen, the true interests of both nations were based upon mutual friendship and goodwill.

This pamphlet excited the attention not only of England, but of the civilised world, and gave birth to eager discussions in every European and American journal. It was published, *in extenso*, in the columns of the *Times* and of the *Manchester Examiner*. Some fifty thousand copies of a cheap edition were circulated by the Peace Congress Committee alone. It passed through many editions; and its readers must have numbered hundreds of thousands.

The preface which Mr. Cobden wrote for the last edition is reproduced on the following page.

## P R E F A C E.

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THE storm of adverse criticism with which the first appearance of this pamphlet was assailed from certain quarters did not surprise me. My censors had joined in the cry of "a French invasion," and my argument would therefore only prove successful in proportion as it impugned their judgment. Unless I could be shown to be wrong, they could not possibly be right. When the accuser is arraigned before the accused, it is not difficult to foresee what the judgment will be. Time can alone arbitrate between me and my opponents; but even they must admit that the three months which have elapsed since I penned these pages have not diminished my chances of a favourable award.

I have endeavoured with all humility to profit by the strictures so liberally bestowed on the historical part of my argument, by correcting any errors into which I might have inadvertently fallen. But I am bound to state that I have not found an excuse for altering a fact, or for adding or withdrawing a single line. I have been charged with an anachronism in having designated the hostilities which terminated in 1815 as "the war of 1793." I must confess that I have regarded this objection as something very like a compliment, in so far at least as it may without presumption be accepted in proof of the difficulties in the way of hostile criticism—for who is ignorant that Napoleon, the genius of that epoch, was brought forth and educated by us—that he, until then an obscure youth, placed his foot upon the first step of the ladder of fame when he drove our forces from Toulon in 1793, and that it was in overcoming the coalitions created by British energy, and subsidised with English gold, that he found occasions for the display of his almost superhuman powers?

It is true that there were brief suspensions of hostilities at the peace, or, more properly speaking, the truce of Amiens, and during Bonaparte's short sojourn at Elba; but even if it were clear that Napoleon's ambition put an end to the peace, it would prove nothing but that he had by the ordinary workings of the moral law been in the meantime raised into a retributive agent for the chastisement of those who were the authors of the original war. I am bound, however, to add that, if we examine the circumstances which led to the renewal of hostilities, after the short intervals of peace, we shall find that our government showed quite as great readiness for war in 1803 and 1815 as they had done in 1793.

R. C.

*March 22nd, 1853.*

# LETTER I.

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MR. COBDEN TO THE REVEREND — —.

*December, 1852.*

MY DEAR SIR,—Accept my thanks for your kindness in forwarding me a copy of your sermon upon the death of the Duke of Wellington. I am glad to observe that, like nearly all the commentators upon the achievements of the great warrior, you think it necessary to assume the fact that the war of the French Revolution was on our side defensive in its origin, and had for its object the vindication of the rights and liberties of mankind. A word or two upon that question by-and-by. But let us at least rejoice that, thanks to the progress of the spirit of Christianity, we have so far improved upon the age of Froissart as no longer to lavish our admiration upon warriors regardless of the cause to which they may devote themselves. It is not enough now that a soldier possesses that courage which Gibbon designates “the cheapest and most common quality of human nature,” and which a still greater \* authority has declared to be the attribute of all men ; he must be *morally* right, or he fights without our sympathy ; he must present better title-deeds than the record of his exploits written in blood with the point of the sword before he can lay claim to our reverence or admiration. This, at least, is the doctrine now professed, and the profession of such a faith, even if our works do not quite correspond, is an act of homage to an advanced civilisation.

The sermon with which you have favoured me, and which is, I presume, but one of many thousands written in the same

\* “I believe every man is brave.”—Duke of Wellington, House of Lords, June 15, 1852.

spirit, takes still higher ground; it looks forward to the time when the religion of Christ shall have so far prevailed over the wickedness of this world that men will "beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." In the meantime it condemns all war, excepting that which is strictly defensive, and waged in behalf of the dearest interests of humanity; it professes no sympathy for warriors, no admiration for the profession of arms, and sees less glory in the achievements of the most successful soldier than in the calm endurance of the Christian martyr, or the heroism of him who first ventures alone and unarmed as the ambassador of Jesus Christ among the heathen. "But," says the sermon, "an occasion may undoubtedly arise when a resort to arms is necessary to rescue the nations of Europe from a tyrant who has trodden their liberties under foot. At such times God has never failed to raise up an instrument to accomplish the good work. Such an occasion undoubtedly was the usurpation of Napoleon and his deadly hostility to this country, and such an instrument was the Duke of Wellington."

It is impossible to deny that the last extract gives expression to the opinion of the majority of the people of this country—or at least to a majority of those who form opinions upon such matters—as to the origin of the last war.

If we were discussing the wars of the Heptarchy the question would not, as Milton has truly observed, deserve more consideration at our hands than a battle of kites and crows. But the impression that exists in the public mind respecting the origin and history of the last French war may affect the question of peace or war for the future. It is already giving a character to our policy towards the government and people of France. There is a prevalent and active belief among us that that war arose from an unprovoked and unjust attack made upon us; that we were desirous of peace, but were forced into hostilities; that in spite of our pacific intentions



our shores were menaced with a French invasion; and that such having been our fate, in spite of all our efforts to avoid a rupture, what so natural as to expect a like treatment from the same quarter in future? and, as a rational deduction from these premises, we call for an increase of our "national defences."

Now so far is this from being a true statement of the case, it is, I regret to say, the very opposite of the truth. I do not hesitate to affirm that nothing was ever more conclusively proved by evidence in a court of law than the fact, resting upon historical documents and official acts, that England was the aggressor in the last French war. It is not enough to say that France did not provoke hostilities. She all but went down on her knees (if I may apply such a phrase to a nation) to avert a rupture with this country. Take one broad fact in illustration of the conduct of the two countries. On the news of the insurrection in Paris on the 10th of August, 1792, reaching this country, our ambassador was immediately recalled, not on the ground that any insult or slight had been offered to him, but on the plea, as stated in the instructions transmitted to him by the foreign minister, a copy of which was presented to Parliament, that the King of France having been deprived of his authority the credentials under which our ambassador had hitherto acted were no longer available; and at the same time we gave the French ambassador at London notice that he would no longer be officially recognised by our government, but could remain in England only in a private capacity. How far the judgment of the present age sanctions the course our government pursued on that occasion may be known by comparing our conduct then with the policy we adopted in 1848, when our ambassador at Paris found no difficulty, after the flight of Louis Philippe, in procuring fresh credentials to the French Republic, and remaining at his post during all the successive changes of rulers, and when our own government hastened to receive the ambassador of France, although he was no longer accredited from a crowned head.

But France being in 1792 already involved in a war with Austria and Prussia, whose armies were marching upon her frontiers, and menaced at the same time by Russia, Sweden, Spain, and Sardinia, being in fact assailed openly or covertly by all the despotic powers of the Continent, nothing was so much to be dreaded by her as a maritime war with England, for which, owing to the neglected state of her navy, she was wholly unprepared.\* By the Treaty of 1786, which then regulated the intercourse of the two countries, it was stipulated that the recalling or sending away their respective ambassadors or ministers should be deemed to be equivalent to a declaration of war between the two countries. Instead of seizing the opportunity of a rupture afforded by the conduct of England, the French Government redoubled their efforts to maintain peace. Their ambassador remained in London from August till the January following, in his private capacity, holding frequent correspondence with our foreign minister, Lord Grenville, submitting to any condition, however humiliating, in order to procure a hearing, and not even resenting the indignity of having had two of his letters returned to him, one of them through the medium of a clerk in the Foreign Office. At length, upon the receipt of the intelligence of the execution of Louis XVI., the French ambassador received, on the 24th January, 1793, from Lord Grenville, an order of the Privy Council peremptorily requiring him to leave the kingdom in eight days.

The sole ground alleged by the British Government for this step was the execution of the French King. England,† which had 140 years before been the first to set the example to

\* England had, in 1792, 153 ships of the line, and France 86.—*James's Naval History*.

† The Marquis of Lansdowne, speaking of the probable execution of the King of France, said, "Such a King was not a fit object for punishment, and to screen him from it every nation ought to interpose its good offices; but England, above all, was bound to do so, because he had reason to believe that what had encouraged the French to bring him to trial was the precedent established by England in the unfortunate and disgraceful case of Charles I."—*Dec. 21, 1792*.

Europe of decapitating a monarch, England which, as is observed by Madame de Stael, has dethroned, banished, and executed more kings than all the rest of Europe, was suddenly seized with so great a horror for regicides, as to be unable to tolerate the presence of the French ambassador !

The war which followed is said by the sermon before me to have been in defence of the liberties of Europe. Where are they? *Circumspice!*—I can only say that I have sought for them from Cadiz to Moscow without having been so fortunate as to find them. When shall we be proof against the transparent appeal to our vanity involved in the “liberties-of-Europe” argument? We had not forty thousand British troops engaged on one field of battle on the Continent during the whole war. Yet we are taught to believe that the nations of Europe, numbering nearly two hundred millions, owe their liberty to our prowess. If so, no better proof could be given that they are not worthy of freedom.

But, in truth, the originators of the war never pretended that they were fighting for the liberties of the people anywhere. Their avowed object was to sustain the old governments of Europe. The advocates of the war were not the friends of popular freedom even at home. The Liberal party were ranged on the side of peace—Lansdowne, Bedford, and Lauderdale, in the Lords; and Fox, Sheridan, and Grey, in the Commons—were the strenuous opponents of the war. They were sustained out of doors by a small minority of intelligent men who saw through the arts by which the war was rendered popular. But (and it is a mournful fact) the advocates of peace were clamoured down, their persons and property left insecure, and even their families exposed to outrage at the hands of the populace. Yes, the whole truth must be told, for we require it to be known, as some safeguard against a repetition of the same scenes; the mass of the people, then wholly uneducated, were instigated to join in the cry for war against France. It is equally true, and must be re-

membered, that when the war had been carried on for two years only, and when its effects had been felt, in the high price of food, diminished employment, and the consequent sufferings of the working classes, crowds of people surrounded the King's carriage, as he proceeded to the Houses of Parliament, shouting, "Bread, bread ! peace, peace !"

But, to revert to the question of the merits of the last French war. The assumption put forth in the sermon that we were engaged in a strictly defensive war is, I regret to say, historically untrue. If you will examine the proofs, as they exist in the unchangeable public records, you will be satisfied of this. And let us not forget that our history will ultimately be submitted to the judgment of a tribunal, over which Englishmen will exercise no influence beyond that which is derived from the truth and justice of their cause, and from whose decision there will be no appeal. I allude, of course, to the collective wisdom and moral sense of future generations of men. In the case before us, however, not only are we constrained by the evidence of facts to confess that we were engaged in an aggressive war, but the multiplied avowals and confessions of its authors and partisans themselves leave no room to doubt that they entered upon it to put down *opinions* by physical force, one of the worst, if not the very worst, of motives with which a people can embark in war. The question, then, is, shall we, in estimating the glory of the general who commands in such a war, take into account the antecedent merits of the war itself? The question is answered by the sermon before me, and by every other writer upon the subject, professing to be under the influence of Christian principles ; they all assume, as the condition precedent, that England was engaged in a defensive war.

There are two ways of judging the merits of a soldier ; the one, by regarding solely his genius as a commander, excluding all considerations of the justice of the cause for which he fights. This is the ancient mode of dealing with the subject, and is

still followed by professional men, and others of easy consciences in such matters. These critics will, for example, recognise a higher title to glory, in the career of Suwarrow than in that of Kosciusko, because the former gained the greater number of important victories.

There is another and more modern school of commentators which *professes* to withhold its admiration from the deeds of the military hero, unless they be performed in defence of justice and humanity. With these the patriot Pole is greater than the Russian general, because his cause was just, he having been obviously engaged in a defensive contest, and contending, too, for the dearest rights of home, family, and country.

Now, the condition which I think we may fairly impose upon the latter description of judges is, that they take the needful trouble to inform themselves of the merits of the cause in hand, so as to be competent to give a conscientious judgment upon it. In the case of the Duke of Wellington, the wars which he carried on with so much ability and success on the Continent, were in their character precisely the opposite of that upon which the sermon ought, according to its own principle, to invoke the approbation of Heaven.

The Duke himself did not evidently recognise the responsibility of the commander for the moral character of his campaigns. His theory of "duty" gave him military absolution, and separated most completely the man from the soldier.

Some of the Duke's biographers have hardly done him justice, in the sense in which they have eulogised him for the strict performance of his duty. Nor have they acted with more fairness towards their countrymen, for, by implication, they would lead us to infer that it is an exception to the rule when an Englishman does his duty. In the vulgar meaning they have attached to this trait in his character, they have lowered him to the level of the humblest labourer who does his duty for weekly wages. *Duty* with the Duke meant something

more. It was a professional principle—the military code expressed in one word. He was always subordinate to some higher authority, and acted from an impulse imparted from without ; just as an army surrenders will, reason, and conscience to some one who exercises all these powers in its behalf. Sometimes it was the Queen ; sometimes the public service ; or the apprehension of a civil war ; or a famine which changed his course, and induced him to take up a new position ; but reason, or conscience, or will, seemed to have no more to do in the matter than in the manœuvres of an army. We did not know to his death what were the Duke's convictions upon Free Trade, Reform, or Catholic Emancipation. In his public capacity he never seemed to ask himself—what *ought* I to do ? but what *must* I do ? This principle of subordination, which is the very essence of military discipline, is at the same time the weak part and blot of the system. It deprives us of the man, and gives us instead a machine ; but one requiring power of some description to move it. The best that can be said of it is, that when honestly adhered to, as in the case of the Duke, it protects us against the attempts of individual selfishness or ambition. He would never have betrayed his trust, so long as he could find a power to whom he was responsible. *That* was the only point upon which he could have ever felt any difficulty. Had he been, like Monk, in the command of an army in times of political confusion, he would have gone to London to discover the legal heir to his “duty,” whether it was the son of the Protector, or the remains of the Rump Parliament ; but he would never have dreamed of selling himself to a Pretender, even had he been the son of a king. Should the time ever come (which Heaven forbid !) when the work which the Duke achieved needs to be repeated, it is not likely that there will be found one who will surpass him in the ability, courage, honesty, and perseverance which he brought to the accomplishment of the task. But amongst all his high merits—and they place him in dignity and moral worth immeasurably above

Marlborough or even Nelson—he would have been probably the last to have claimed for himself the title of the champion of the liberties of any people. No attentive reader of his despatches will fall into any such delusion as to his own views of his mission to the Peninsula. Or if any doubt still remain, let him consult the classic pages of Napier.

Let me only refer you to the accompanying extracts from the “History of the Peninsular War”:—

“But the occult source of most of these difficulties is to be found in the inconsistent attempts of the British Cabinet to uphold national independence with internal slavery against foreign aggression with an ameliorated government. The clergy, who led the mass of the people, clung to the English, because they supported aristocracy and church domination.

\* \* \* The English ministers hating Napoleon, not because he was the enemy of England, but because he was the champion of equality, cared not for Spain unless her people were enslaved. They were willing enough to use a liberal Cortes to defeat Napoleon, but they also desired to put down that Cortes by the aid of the clergy, and of the bigoted part of the people.”—Vol. iv., p. 259.

“It was some time before the church and aristocratic party discovered that the secret policy of England was the same as their own. It was so, however, even to the upholding of the Inquisition, which it was ridiculously asserted had become objectionable only in name.”—Vol. iv., p. 350.

I could also refer you to another instructive passage (vol. iii., p. 271), telling us, amongst other things, that the “educated classes of Spain shrunk from the British Government’s known hostility to all free institutions.” But I have carried my letter already to an unreasonable length, and so I conclude.—Yours faithfully, RICHARD COBDEN.

*To the Reverend ———*

## LETTER II.

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MR. COBDEN TO THE REVEREND ———.

December, 1852.

MY DEAR SIR,—You asked me to direct you to the best sources of information for those particulars of the origin of the French war to which I briefly alluded in my last letter. What an illustration does this afford of our habitual neglect of the most important part of history, namely, that which refers to our own country, and more immediately affects the destinies of the generation to which we belong! If you *feel* at a loss for the facts necessary for forming a judgment upon the events of the last century, how much more inaccessible must that knowledge be to the mass of the people. In truth, modern English history is a tabooed study in our common schools, and the young men of our Universities acquire a far more accurate knowledge of the origin and progress of the Punic and Peloponnesian wars than of the wars of the French Revolution.

The best record of facts, and especially of State papers, referring to our modern history is to be found in the *Annual Register*. These materials have been digested by several writers. The *Pictorial History of England* is not conveniently arranged for reference; and, although the facts are carefully given, the opinions, with reference to the events in question, have a strong Tory bias. The earliest and latest periods of this history are written in a liberal and enlightened spirit; but that portion which embraces the American and French revolutions fell somehow under the control of politicians of a more contracted and bigoted school. Alison, of whose views and principles I shall not be expected to approve, has



given the best narrative of the events which followed the French Revolution down to the close of the war. His work, which has passed through many editions, is admirably arranged for reference. Scott's *Life of Napoleon* is the most readable book upon the subject, but not the most reliable for facts and figures.

But if you would really understand the motives with which we embarked upon the last French war, you must turn to Hansard, and read the debates in both Houses of Parliament upon the subject from 1791 to 1796. This has been with me a favourite amusement; and I have culled many extracts which are within reach. Shall I put them together for you? They may probably be of use beyond the purposes of a private letter. But there is one condition for which I will stipulate. There must be a very precise and accurate attention to dates in order to understand the subject in hand. Banish from your mind all vague floating ideas arising out of a confusion of events extending over the twenty-two years of war. Our business lies with the interval from 1789, when the Constituent Assembly of France met, till 1793, when war commenced between England and France. Bear in mind we are now merely investigating the origin and cause of the rupture between the two countries.

The ten years from the close of the American war in 1783 to the commencement of the war with France in 1793, was a period of remarkable prosperity. To the astonishment of all parties the separation of the American Colonies, which had been dreaded as the signal for our national ruin, was followed by an increased commercial intercourse with the mother country. The mechanical inventions connected with the cotton trade and other manufactures, and the recent improvement in the steam engine, were adding rapidly to our powers of production; and the consequent demand for labour, and accumulation of capital diffused general comfort and well-being throughout the land. Such a state of things always tends to produce political contentment, and never were the people of this country less disposed to seek for reforms, still less to think of revolution,

than when the attention of Europe was first drawn to the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly of France in 1789. The startling reforms effected by that body, and the captivating appeals to first principles made by its orators, soon attracted the sympathies of a certain class of philosophical reformers in this country, who, followed by a few of the more intelligent and speculative amongst the artisan class in the towns, began to take an active interest in French politics. Amongst the most influential of the leaders of this party were Doctor Price and Doctor Priestley, and the Dissenters generally were ranked amongst their adherents. But the great mass of the population were strongly, almost fanatically, on the side of the Church, which was of course opposed to the doctrines of the French Assembly; the spirit of hostility to Dissenters broke forth in many parts of the country, and in Birmingham and other manufacturing places it led to riots, and a considerable destruction of property. "It was not," said Mr. Fox,\* "in his opinion a republican spirit that we had to dread in this country; there was no tincture of republicanism in the country. If there was any prevailing tendency to riot, it was on the other side. It was the High Church spirit, and an indisposition to all reform which marked more than anything else the temper of the times."

Such was the state of the public mind when Mr. Burke published his celebrated *Reflections on the French Revolution*, a work which produced an instant and most powerful effect not only in England, but upon the governing classes on the Continent. This production was given to the world in 1790: the date is all important; for bear in mind that the Constituent Assembly had then been sitting for a year only; that its labours had been directed to the effecting of reforms compatible with the preservation of a limited monarchy; and that such men as Lafayette and Necker had been taking a lead in its delibera-

\* House of Commons, May 25, 1792. All the speeches from which I have quoted were delivered in Parliament, and the quotations are from Hansard.

tions. Do not confound in your mind the proceedings of this body with those of the Legislative Assembly which succeeded to it the next year ; or the National Convention which followed the year after. Do not disturb your fancy with thoughts of the Reign of Terror: *that* did not begin till four years later. Burke's great philippic contains no complaint of the Constituent Assembly having interfered with us, or meditated forcing its reforms upon other countries. It gives utterance to no suspicion of a warlike tendency on the side of the French. On the contrary, the author of the *Reflections*, in a speech upon the army estimates in the House of Commons on the 9th of February of this year (1790), declared that "the French army was rendered an army for every other purpose than that of defence;" describing the French soldiers "as base hireling mutineers, and mercenary sordid deserters, wholly destitute of any honourable principle;" alleging, on the same occasion, "that France is at this time in a political light to be considered as expunged out of the system of Europe;" and he asserted that the French "had done their business for us as rivals in a way in which twenty Ramilies or Blenheims could never have done it."

What, then, was the ground on which he assailed the French Government with a force of invective that drew from Fox six years later the following tribute to its fatal influence?

"In a most masterly performance, he has charmed all the world with the brilliancy of his genius, fascinating the country with the powers of his eloquence, and in as far as that cause went to produce this effect, plunged the country into all the calamities consequent upon war. I admire the genius of the man, and I admit the integrity and usefulness of his long public life; I cannot, however, but lament that his talents, when in my opinion they were directed most beneficially to the interest of his country, produced very little effect, and that when he espoused sentiments different from those which I hold to be wise and expedient, then his exertions should have been crowned with a success that I deplore."

Read this famous performance again ; and then, having freed your mind from the effects of its gorgeous imagery, and fascinating style, ask yourself what grounds it affords, what facts it contains to justify even an angry remonstrance, still less to lead to a war. From beginning to end it is an indictment against the representatives of the French people, for having presumed to pursue a course, in a strictly domestic matter, contrary to what Mr. Burke and the English, who are assumed to be infallible judges, held to be the wisest policy. Everything is brought to the test of our own practice, and condemned or approved in proportion as it is in opposition to or in harmony with British example. The Constituent Assembly is charged with robbery, usurpation, imposture, cheating, violence, and tyranny, for presuming to abolish the law of primogeniture, or appropriate their Church lands to secular purposes, making religion a charge upon the State ; or limit to a greater degree than ourselves the prerogative of the Crown ; or establish universal suffrage as the basis of their representation ; changes which however unsuitable they may have been to the habits and dispositions of Englishmen were yet such as have not been found incompatible with the prosperity of the people of America, and which to a large extent are practically applied to the government of our own colonies.

But let us see what was done besides by this Assembly. Liberty of religious worship to its fullest extent was secured ; torture abolished ; trial by jury and publicity of courts of law were established ; *lettres-de-cachet* abolished ; the nobles and clergy made liable in common with other classes to taxation ; the most oppressive imposts, such as those on salt, tobacco, *the taille*, &c., suppressed ; the feudal privileges of the nobles extinguished ; access to the superior ranks of the army, heretofore monopolised by the privileged class, made free to all ; and the same rule applied to all civil employments.

I dwell on these particulars, because it was from this sweeping list of reforms, effected by the Constituent Assembly

of France, and the sympathy which they excited amongst the more active and intelligent of our liberal politicians, that the war between the two countries really sprung. It was not to put down the Reign of Terror that we entered upon hostilities. That would have been no legitimate object for a war. But the Reign of Terror did not commence till nearly a year after the war began. Our indignation was not excited to blows in 1793, by the madness which afterwards possessed the National Convention, and which manifested itself in the alteration of the Calendar, the abolition of Christianity, and, finally, in the deposition of the Deity Himself. These were the consequences, not the causes of war. No, the war was entered upon to prevent the contagion of those principles which were put forth in such captivating terms in 1789 and 1790 by the Constituent Assembly of France. The ruling class in England took alarm at a revolution going on in a neighbouring state where the governing body had abolished all hereditary titles, appropriated the Church lands to State purposes, and decreed universal suffrage as the basis of the representative system. "If," says Alison,\* "the changes in France were regarded with favour by one, they were looked on with utter horror by another class of the community. The majority of the aristocratic body, all the adherents of the Church, all the holders of office under the Monarchy, in general, the great bulk of the opulent ranks of society, beheld them with apprehension or aversion."

From this moment the friends and opponents of the French Revolution formed themselves into opposing parties, whose conduct, says Sir W. Scott,† resembled that of rival factions at a play, who hiss and applaud the actors on the stage as much from party spirit as from real critical judgment; while every instant increases the probability that they will try the question by actual force. Strange that to neither party should it have occurred that to the twenty-four millions of Frenchmen

\* Vol. iii. p. 108.

† "Life of Napoleon," ch. vii.

interested in the issue, might be left the task of framing their own government, without the intervention of the people of England; and that the circumstance of a peculiar form of Constitution having been found suitable for one country, did not necessarily prove that it would be acceptable to the other!

But the Revolution in France produced a more decisive impression on the despotic powers of the Continent. As soon as the democratic measures of the Constituent Assembly were accomplished, and the powers of the King made subordinate to the will of the representative body, the neighbouring potentates took the alarm, and began to concert measures for enabling Louis XVI. to recover at least a part of his lost prerogatives. The Emperor of Germany, Leopold, the most able and enlightened Sovereign of Europe, who, as Grand Duke of Tuscany had carried out many of those great economical and legal reforms which constitute the pride of modern statesmen, took the lead in these unwarrantable acts of intervention in the affairs of the French people. His relationship to the Queen of Louis XVI. (for they were both the offspring of Maria Theresa) afforded, however, an amiable plea for his conduct, which was not shared by his Royal confederates. Almost every crowned head on the Continent was now covertly or openly conspiring against the principle of self-government in France; and even the Sovereign of England, under the title of King of Hanover, was supposed to be represented at some of their private conferences. The result was the famous Declaration of Pilnitz, put forth in the names of the Emperor and the King of Prussia, in which they declared conjointly, "That they consider the situation of the King of France as a matter of common interest to all the European Sovereigns. They hope that the reality of that interest will be duly appreciated by the other powers, whose assistance they will invoke, and that in consequence, they will not decline to employ their forces conjointly with their Majesties, in order to put the King

of France in a situation to lay the foundation of a monarchical government, conformable alike to the rights of Sovereigns and the well-being of the French nation. In that case, the Emperor and the King are resolved to act promptly with the forces necessary to attain their common end. In the meantime, they will give the requisite orders for their troops to hold themselves in immediate readiness for active service."

It is all-important to observe the date of this Declaration—August 27, 1791—for upon the date depends entirely the question whether France or the Allied Powers were the authors and instigators of the war. Up to this period the French were wholly engrossed in their own internal reforms, and had not given the slightest ground for suspecting that they meditated an act of hostility against any foreign power. "Whilst employed in the extension and security of her liberties," says Mr. Baines, in his able and candid history of these events, "amidst the struggle with a reluctant monarch, a discontented priesthood, and a hostile nobility, she was menaced at the same time by a sudden and portentous combination of the two great military states—Prussia under the dominion of Frederic William, and Austria under the Emperor Leopold, brother to Marie Antoinette, queen of France." The French were wholly unprepared for war. Not only were their finances in a ruinous state—the army had fallen into disorder; for whilst the common soldiers were enthusiastic partisans of the Revolution, the officers, who were all of the class of nobles, were often its violent enemies, and many of them had fled the kingdom. Great as was at that time the dread of French principles, no foreign power felt any fear of the physical force of France; for everybody shared the opinion of Burke, that that country had reduced itself to a state of abject weakness by its revolutionary excesses.

But the best proof that the French Government had not given any good ground of offence to foreign powers, is to be



found in the fact that the declaration of the Allied Sovereigns contains no complaint of the kind. Their sole object, as avowed by them in this and subsequent manifestoes, was to restore the King to the prerogatives of which he had been deprived by his people. It needs no argument now to prove that this threat of an armed intervention in the internal affairs of France was tantamount to a declaration of war. Compare this conduct of the despotic powers in 1791 with the abstinence from all interference—nay, the punctilious disavowal of all right to interfere—in the domestic affairs of France in 1848, when the changes in the government of that country were of a far more sudden and startling character than those which had taken place at the time of the Declaration of Pilnitz.

These proceedings of the Allied Powers were not sufficient to divert the French from the all-absorbing domestic struggle in which they were involved. No acts of hostility immediately followed. The wise Leopold, who wished to support the authority of the King of France by other means than war, now exerted himself to assemble a congress of all the great powers of Europe, with a view to agree to a form of government for France. Whilst busying himself with this scheme, death put a sudden close to his reign, and his less prudent and pacific successor soon brought matters to extremities. In the meantime Russia, Sweden, Sardinia, and Spain, assumed a more and more hostile attitude towards France. It was, however, from the side of Germany where twenty thousand emigrant French nobles were menacing their native country with invasion, that the chief danger was apprehended; and it was to the Emperor that the French Government addressed itself for a categorical explanation of its intentions. The note in answer demanded the re-establishment of the French monarchy on the basis which had been rejected by the nation in 1789; it required the restoration of the Church lands, part of which had been sold; and it ignored all that had been done by the Constituent Assembly during the last two years. But I will give a description of the Note



by one whose leaning to the French will not be suspected.\* "The demands of the Austrian Court went now, when fully explained, so far back upon the Revolution, that a peace negotiated upon such terms must have laid France and all its various parties (with the exception of a few of the First Assembly) at the "foot of the sovereign, and, what might be more dangerous, at the mercy of the restored emigrants." The consequences of this Note may be described in the language of the same author. "The Legislative Assembly received these extravagant terms as an insult on the national dignity; and the King, whatever might be his sentiments as an individual, could not, on this occasion, dispense with the duty his office as constitutional monarch imposed on him. Louis, therefore, had the melancholy task of proposing† to an Assembly filled with the enemies of his throne and person, a declaration of war against his brother-in-law‡ the Emperor."

Thus began a war which, if not the longest, was the bloodiest and most costly that ever afflicted mankind. Whatever faults or crimes may be fairly chargeable upon the French nation for the excesses and cruelties of the Revolution up to this time (April, 1792) it cannot be with justice made responsible for the commencement of the war. What *might* have happened if foreign governments had abstained from all interference, has frequently been a topic of speculation and hypothetical prophecy with those who, whilst admitting that the French were not the aggressors, are yet unwilling to allow that war could have been avoided. If such speculations were worth pursuing, surely the experience we have since had in France and other countries would lead to the conclusion that a nation, if unmolested from without, is never so little prone to meddle with its neighbours as when involved in the difficulties, dangers, and embarrassments of an internal revolution. But we have to

\* Scott's Napoleon.

† 20th April, 1792.

‡ With his too common inaccuracy, the author has overlooked the previous death of Leopold.

deal with facts and experiences, and they prove that in the case before us France was the aggrieved, and not the aggressive, party.

It is true that France was the first to *declare* war ; which is a proof that she had more respect for the usages and laws of nations than her enemies ; for they were making formidable preparations for an invasion, under the plea of restoring order, and re-establishing the King on his throne, with the view, as they pretended, of benefiting the French people. They would not have declared war against France, but against the oppressors of France, as they chose to term the Legislative Assembly. The resistance they met with proved that they were opposed by the whole French nation ; and, therefore, the only plea put forth in their justification fails them in the hands of the historian.

On the 25th July following, the Duke of Brunswick, when, on the eve of invading France, with an army of 80,000 Austrian and Prussian troops, and a formidable band of emigrant French nobles, issued a manifesto, in the name of Austria and Prussia, in which he states his conviction that “the majority of the inhabitants of France wait with impatience the moment when succour shall arrive, to declare themselves openly against the odious enterprises of their oppressors.” To afford a full knowledge of the objects of the invaders, and of the atrocious spirit which animated them, I give the following extract from the 8th article of this manifesto :—

“The city of Paris and all its inhabitants, without distinction, shall be called upon to submit instantly, and without delay, to the King, to set that prince at full liberty, and to ensure to him and all the royal persons that inviolability and respect which are due, *by the laws of nature* and of all nations, to sovereigns ; their Imperial and Royal Majesties making personally responsible for all events, on pain of losing their heads, pursuant to military trials, without hope of pardon, all the members of the National Assembly, of the Departments, of

the Districts, of the Municipality, and of the National Guards of Paris, Justices of the Peace, and others whom it may concern. And their Imperial and Royal Majesties further declare, on the faith and word of Emperor and King, that if the palace of the Tuileries be forced or insulted, if the least violence be offered, the least outrage done, their Majesties, the King, the Queen, and the Royal Family, if they be not immediately placed in safety, and set at liberty, they will inflict on those who shall deserve it the most exemplary and ever memorable avenging punishment, *by giving up the city of Paris to military execution, and exposing it to total destruction.*"

In an additional declaration, published two days later, after declaring that he makes no alteration in the 8th article of the former manifesto, he adds, in case the King, Queen, or any member or the Royal Family should be carried off by any of the factions, that "all the places and towns whatsoever, which shall not have opposed their passage, and shall not have stopped their proceeding, *shall incur the same punishments as those inflicted on the inhabitants of Paris* ; and the route which shall be taken by those who carry off the King and the Royal Family shall be marked with a series of exemplary punishments, justly due to the authors and abettors of crimes for which there is no remission."

Let it be borne in mind that these proclamations, worthy of Timoor or Attila, were issued at a moment when Louis XVI. was still exercising the functions of a Constitutional Sovereign in France ; for it was not till the 10th of August that his palace was assailed by the armed populace, and he and his family were consigned to a prison. And here, in taking leave of the belligerents on the Continent—for my task is confined to the investigation of the origin, and not the progress of the war—let it be observed that there is not a writer, whether French or English, who, in recording historically the dismal catalogue of crimes which from this time for a period of three years disgraced the domestic annals of France, does not attribute the

ferocity of the people, and the atrocities committed by them, in a large degree, to the proclamation of the Duke of Brunswick, and the subsequent invasion of the French territory.

There is nothing so certain to extinguish the magnanimity, which is the natural attribute of great multitudes of men, conscious of their strength, as the suspicion of treachery on the part of those to whom they are opposed. It is under the excitement of this passion that the most terrible sacrifices to popular vengeance have been made. The names of De Witt and Artevelde are remarkable among the victims to popular suspicion. But never was this feeling excited to such a state of frenzy as in Paris on the first news of the successes of the invading armies. The King, the nobility, the clergy, and all the opulent classes were suspected of being in correspondence with the foreigner; and the terrors of the populace pictured the Austrians already at the gates of Paris, and the royalists pouring forth to welcome them and to offer their aid in the vengeance which was to follow. It was under this impression of treachery that the horrible massacre of the political prisoners, on the 2nd of September, took place.

But I prefer to give the testimony of a writer who will have little sympathy, probably, for the main argument of this letter :

“No doubt,” says Alison,\* “can now exist that the interference of the Allies augmented the horrors and added to the duration of the Revolution. All its bloodiest excesses were committed during or after an alarming, but unsuccessful, invasion by the allied forces. The massacres of September 2nd were perpetrated when the public mind was excited to the highest degree by the near approach of the Duke of Brunswick, and the worst days of the government of Robespierre were immediately after the defection of Dumourier and the battle of Nerwinde threatened the rule of the Jacobins with destruction. Nothing but a sense of public danger could have united the factions who then

\* Vol. v. p. 129.

strove with so much exasperation against each other ; the peril of France alone could have induced the people to submit to the sanguinary rule which so long desolated its plains. The Jacobins maintained their ascendancy by constantly representing their cause as that of national independence, by stigmatising their enemies as the enemies of the country ; and the patriots wept and suffered in silence, lest by resistance they should weaken the state and cause France to be erased from among the nations."

If facts have any logical bearing upon human affairs, I think I have shown that the war was provoked by the allied powers. Let us now turn to the part performed by England in the events which followed.

From the moment of the appearance of Burke's famous *Reflections* in 1790, the character, objects, and proceedings of the Constituent Assembly occupied every day more intensely the attention of the English public. The country took sides, and politicians attacked or defended, according to their own views and aspirations, the conduct of the leaders of the Revolution. Not only were the columns of the newspapers occupied with this all-engrossing topic, but the press teemed with pamphlets and volumes in support of, or in opposition to, Burke's production. The most masterly of the latter class was the *Vindiciæ Galliæ* of Sir James Macintosh, which advocated the fundamental principles of freedom and humanity with a far closer logic and a style scarcely less attractive than that of his great opponent. By degrees the character of the liberal party, comprising the Whigs and Dissenters, became involved to some extent in the fate of the Revolution, and their opponents took care to heap upon them all the odium which attached to the disorders and excesses of the French people. When the Jacobins, as the ultra party were nicknamed, became powerful in France, that detestable name was assigned to the English reformers by their Tory enemies, who, holding as they did the stamp of fashion in their hands, could give general currency to their damaging epithets.

But gradually, and almost imperceptibly, a change came over the character of the controversy. In a couple of years the tone of the dominant classes had altered, first from cold criticism upon the Revolution to fierce invectives, then to menaces, and finally to the cry for war, until at last the Tories and Liberals, instead of being merely contending commentators upon French politics were involved in a fierce contest with each other upon the question of peace or war with the government of France. From that time all that remained of the liberal party, thinned as it was by defection, and headed heroically by Fox, ranged themselves on the side of peace. "The cry of peace," said Windham\* (Secretary at War), "proceeded from the Jacobin party in this country, and although every one who wished for peace was not a Jacobin, yet every Jacobin wished for peace."

There is every reason to suppose that Pitt† would have individually preferred peace. By a commercial treaty which he had entered into with France a few years previously he had

\* May 27, 1795.

† "No one more clearly than Mr. Pitt saw the ruinous consequences of the contest into which his new associates, the deserters from the Whig standard, were drawing or were driving him. None so clearly perceived or so highly valued the blessings of peace as the finance minister who had but the year before accompanied his reduction of the whole national establishment with a picture of our future prosperity almost too glowing even for his great eloquence to attempt. Accordingly, it is well known, nor is it even contradicted by his few surviving friends, that his thoughts were all turned to peace. But the voice of the court was for war; the aristocracy was for war; the country was not disinclined towards war, being just in that state of excitable (though as yet not excited) feeling which is dependent on the Government, that is, upon Mr. Pitt, either to calm down into a sufferance of peace or rouse into a vehement desire of hostilities. In these circumstances the able tactician, whose genius was confined to parliamentary operations, at once perceived that a war must place him at the head of all the power in the State, and, by uniting with him the more aristocratic portion of the Whigs, cripple his adversaries irreparably; and he preferred flinging his country into a contest which he and his great antagonist, by uniting their forces, might have prevented; but then he must also have shared with Mr. Fox the power which he was determined to enjoy alone and supreme."—*Brougham's Statesmen of George III., series i., vol. i., p. 77-79.*

greatly extended the trading relations of the two countries, and it is known that he was bent upon some important plans of financial and commercial reform. Upon the meeting of Parliament in 1792, he proposed reduced estimates for our military establishments, and nothing boded the approach of war. The governing class in this country shared the opinions of Mr. Burke as to the powerless condition to which France had reduced herself by her internal convulsion. A veteran army of nearly 100,000 men, under experienced generals, was preparing to invade that country, which, torn by civil strife, with a bankrupt exchequer, and with the court, aristocracy, and clergy secretly favouring the enemy, seemed to offer a certain triumph to its assailants. Little doubt was felt that one campaign would "restore order" to France.

But the Duke of Brunswick's atrocious proclamation had produced upon the French people an effect very different from that which was expected. It is thus described by Alison :\*

"A unanimous spirit of resistance burst forth in every part of France. The military preparations were redoubled; the ardour of the multitude was raised to the highest pitch. The manifesto of the allied powers was regarded as unfolding the real designs of the court and the emigrants. Revolt against the throne appeared the only mode of maintaining their liberties or preserving their independence; the people of Paris had no choice between victory or death."

The campaign which followed proved disastrous to the invaders, and in September the Duke of Brunswick was in full retreat from French territory. Soon afterwards Dumourier gained the battle of Jemmappes, and took possession of the Austrian Netherlands. On the Rhine and the frontier of Savoy the French armies were also successful.

An instantaneous change of policy now took place in England. The Government had looked on in silence, or with merely an occasional protestation of neutrality, whilst the allied

\* Vol. ii. p. 330.

armies were preparing to invade, and, as everybody believed, to occupy the French territory. But no sooner did the news of French victories arrive than the tone of our ministers instantly changed, and even Pitt, with all his cautiousness, was so thrown off his guard, that he disclosed the true object of the war which followed :—

“Those opinions,” said he,\* “which the French entertained, were of the most dangerous nature ; they were opinions professed by interest, inflamed by passion, propagated by delusion, which their success had carried to the utmost excess, and had contributed to render still more dangerous. For, would the Right Honourable Gentleman tell him that the French opinions received no additional weight from the success of their armies? Was it possible to separate between the progress of their opinions and the success of their armies? It was evident that the one must influence the other, and that the diffusion of their principles must keep pace with the extent of their victories. He was not afraid of the progress of French principles in this country, unless the defence of the country should be previously undermined by the introduction of those principles.”

And in the same speech he thus particularises the objects of his solicitude :—

“They had seen, within two or three years, a revolution in France, founded upon principles which were inconsistent with every regular government, which were hostile to hereditary monarchy, to nobility, to all the privileged orders, and to every sort of popular representation, short of that which would give to every individual a voice in the election of representatives.”

The militia was now suddenly embodied, and Parliament was summoned to meet on the 13th of December. Before, however, we refer to this, the closing scene of the peace, it is necessary for a correct understanding of our relationship with

\* Jan. 4, 1793.



France to take a review of the correspondence which was at the same time going on between our Foreign Secretary and M. Chauvelin, the French ambassador at London. Here again, we must pay particular attention to dates.\*

The correspondence commences with a letter, dated May 12, 1792, from M. Chauvelin to Lord Grenville, explaining the cause of the war between France and the Emperor, and complaining in the name of the King of the French that the Emperor Leopold had promoted a great conspiracy against France.

On the 18th June, 1792, M. Chauvelin alludes at greater length, in a letter to Lord Grenville, to the coalition formed on the Continent against France, and asks the British Government to exert its influence to stop the progress of that confederacy, and especially "to dissuade from all accession to this project all those of the allies of England whom it may be wished to draw into it!"

In reply to this letter, Lord Grenville declines to interfere with the allies of this country, to put an end to the confederacy against France, alleging that "the intervention of his counsels or of his good offices cannot be of use unless they should be desired by all the parties interested." [In direct contradiction to his, was the following passage in the King's speech, January 31, of this very year, 1792, on opening the session:—"Our

\* And here let me give an extract from Scott's *Life of Napoleon*, illustrative of the looseness and inaccuracy with which history is sometimes written. I have explained the errors in italics:—

"Lord Gower, the British ambassador, was recalled from Paris immediately on the King's execution." [*He was recalled on the King's deposition in August, his execution not taking place till January following.*] "The Prince to whom he was sent was no more; and, on the same ground, the French envoy at the Court of St. James, though not dismissed by his Majesty's Government, was made acquainted that the ministers no longer considered him as an accredited person." [*The French ambassador was peremptorily ordered to leave this country in eight days, upon the news of the King's death reaching this country.*] And from these inaccurate data he draws the conclusion that we are not the aggressors in the war which immediately followed.

intervention has also been employed with a view to promote a pacification between the Empress of Russia and the Porte; and conditions have been agreed upon *between us and the former of these powers which we undertook to recommend to the Porte*, as the re-establishment of peace on such terms appeared to be, under all the circumstances, a desirable event for the general interests of Europe.”]

On the news of the dethronement of the King of France in August, M. Chauvelin received notice, as has been before seen, that he would no longer be recognised by the English Government in his official character; and there was an interval of several months during which the correspondence was suspended. On the 13th December, as before stated, Parliament was hastily assembled: the King's speech announced that the militia had been embodied, and recommended an increase of the army and navy; it complained of the aggressive conduct of the French, and their disregard of the rights of neutral nations. [Not a syllable had been said in disapproval of the conduct of the allied powers when they began the unprovoked attack on France, an attack the complete failure of which was now known in England.] The speeches of the ministers and the majority in Parliament, in the debate on the address, were of a most warlike character. On the 27th of December, 1792, after these occurrences (do not for a moment lose sight of the dates), M. Chauvelin renews the correspondence with Lord Grenville. He begins by saying that he makes his communication at the request of his own Government. After adducing the fact of his having remained in England since August, notwithstanding the recall of our ambassador Lord Gower from Paris, as “a proof of the desire the French Government had to live on good terms with his Britannic Majesty,” he proceeds to complain that “a character of ill-will to which he is yet unwilling to give credit,” has been observable in the measures recently adopted by the British Government, and he asks whether France ought to consider England as a neutral power

or an enemy. "But in asking from the ministers of his Britannic Majesty a frank and open explanation as to their intentions with regard to France, the Executive Council of the French Government is unwilling they should have the smallest remaining doubt as to the disposition of France towards England, and as to its desire of remaining at peace with her ; it has ever been desirous of answering beforehand all the reproaches which they may be tempted to make in justification of a rupture." He then proceeds to offer explanations upon the three reasons which he surmises might weigh with the English, and lead them "to break with the French Republic." The first has reference to the decree of the National Convention of the 19th November, offering fraternity to all people who wish to recover their liberty ; the next, the opening of the Scheldt, consequent upon the conquest of the Austrian Netherlands ; and thirdly, the violation of the territory of Holland. With respect to the decree of the 19th November, offering assistance to all people wishing for liberty, he said : "The National Convention never meant that the French Republic should favour insurrections, should espouse the quarrels of a few seditious persons, or in a word should endeavour to excite disturbances in any neutral or friendly country whatever." He then proceeds to say—"France ought to and will respect, not only the independence of England, but even that of those of her allies with whom she is not at war. The undersigned has therefore been charged formally to declare that she will not attack Holland so long as that power shall on its side confine itself towards her within the bounds of a strict neutrality." He then refers to the only other question, the opening of the Scheldt, "a question irrevocably decided by reason and justice, of small importance in itself, and on which the opinion of England, and perhaps of Holland itself, is sufficiently known to render it difficult to make it seriously the single subject of war."

M. Chauvelin says, in conclusion, "He hopes that the

ministers of his Britannic Majesty will be brought back by the explanations which this note contains, to ideas more favourable to the re-union of the two countries, and that they will not have occasion, nor the purpose of returning to them, to consider the terrible responsibility of a declaration of war, which will incontestably be their own work, the consequences of which cannot be otherwise than fatal to the two countries, and to human nature in general, and in which a generous and free people cannot long consent to betray their own interests, by serving as an auxiliary and a reinforcement to a tyrannical coalition."

The reply of Lord Grenville, dated December 31, begins in the following haughty fashion:—"I have received, Sir, from you a note, in which, styling yourself minister plenipotentiary of France, you communicate to me, as the King's Secretary of State, the instructions which you state to have yourself received from the Executive Council of the French Republic. You are not ignorant, that since the unhappy events of the 10th August, the King has thought proper to suspend all official communication with France." The rest of the letter repels with little ceremony the advances of the French minister, and subjects his pleas and excuses to a cold and incredulous criticism. It reiterates the complaints respecting the Decree of the 19th November, the opening of the Scheldt, and the violation of the territory of Holland. "If France," said Lord Grenville, "is really desirous of maintaining friendship and peace with England, she must shew herself disposed to renounce her views of aggression and aggrandisement, and confine herself within her own territory, without insulting other governments, without disturbing their tranquillity, or violating their rights." [It would have added much to the force of this remonstrance if a similar tone had been taken a year earlier, when the famous Declaration of Pilnitz was published.]

M. Chauvelin, notwithstanding this repulse, again addresses Lord Grenville, January 7, 1793, bringing under his notice the Alien bill just introduced into Parliament, and which contained,

as he alleged, provisions, so far as French citizens were concerned, inconsistent with the letter and spirit of the treaty of commerce entered into by France and England in 1786; and he concludes by asking to be informed whether, "under the general denomination of foreigners, in the bill on which the Houses are occupied, the Government of Great Britain means likewise to include the French." This letter is returned to the writer by Lord Grenville, the same day, accompanied with a short note, declaring it to be "totally inadmissible, M. Chauvelin assuming therein a character which is not acknowledged."

Unable to obtain a hearing in his official capacity, M. Chauvelin abandons the former style of his letters, which ran—*the undersigned minister plenipotentiary, &c.*, and now addresses a letter to Lord Grenville, beginning "My Lord," and dropping all allusion to his own diplomatic quality. In this letter, he complains that several vessels in British ports freighted with grain for the French Government had been stopped, contrary to law; he has been informed by respectable authorities that the custom-houses had received orders to permit the exportation of foreign wheat to all ports except those of France; and he goes on to say, "I should the first moment of my knowing it, have waited upon you, my Lord, to be assured from yourself of its certainty, or its falsehood, if the determination taken by his Britannic Majesty, in the present circumstance, to break off all communication between the governments of the two countries, had not rendered friendly and open steps the more difficult in proportion as they became the more necessary."

And he adds:—"But I considered, my Lord, when the question of war or peace arose between two powerful nations, that which manifested the desire of attending to all explanations, that which strove the longest to preserve the last link of union and friendship, was the only one which appeared truly worthy and truly great. I beseech you, my Lord, in the name of public faith, in the name of justice and of humanity, to explain

to me facts which I will not characterise, and which the French nation would take for granted by your silence only, or by the refusal of an answer."

Lord Grenville's answer, dated 9th January, 1793, evades the question :—"I do not know," says he, "in what capacity you address me, in the letter which I have received; but in every case it would be necessary to know the resolutions which shall have been taken in France, in consequence of what has already passed before I can enter into any new explanations, especially with respect to measures founded, in a great degree, on those motives of jealousy and uneasiness which I have already detailed to you."

Nothing daunted, the indefatigable Frenchman renews the correspondence on the 11th. But having resumed the diplomatic style of "the undersigned minister plenipotentiary," his letter, which states that the "French Republic cannot but regard the conduct of the English Government as a manifest infraction of the treaty of commerce concluded between the two powers, and that, consequently, France ceases to consider herself as bound by that treaty, and that she regards it from this moment as broken and annulled," was returned to him by *Mr. Aust*, a clerk, probably, in the Foreign Office, with the following note :—

"Mr. Aust is charged to send back to M. Chauvelin the enclosed paper received yesterday at the office for Foreign Affairs."

Next, we have a letter from M. Chauvelin to Lord Grenville, written in an unofficial form, dated January 12th, stating that he had just received a messenger from Paris, and soliciting a personal interview; which request is granted, on condition that the communication be put upon paper. On the following day M. Chauvelin communicates to Lord Grenville a copy of a paper which he had received from M. Le Brun, the Foreign Minister of France. This dispatch contains the strongest expressions of a desire to maintain amicable relations with

England. "The sentiments of the French nation towards the English," says the Foreign Minister of France, "have been manifested during the whole course of the Revolution, in so constant, so unanimous a manner, that there cannot remain the smallest doubt of the esteem which it has vowed them, and of its desire of having them for friends." He then proceeds to discuss, at length, the several topics in dispute between the two countries. As respects the obnoxious decree of the 19th November, every effort is made to explain away its offensive meaning, and it is at last admitted that the object contemplated "might, perhaps, be dispensed with by the National Convention, that it was scarcely worth the while to express it, and it did not deserve to be made the object of a particular decree."

Assuming that the British Government is satisfied with the declaration made on the part of the French, relative to Holland, the paper proceeds, at length, into the question of the opening of the Scheldt, which is justified by an appeal to the rights of nature and of all the nations of Europe. The Emperor of Germany concluded the treaty for giving the exclusive right of the navigation of the Scheldt to the Dutch without consulting the Belgians. "The Emperor, to secure the possession of the Low Countries, sacrificed, without scruple, the most inviolable of rights." And, further, "France enters into war with the House of Austria, expels it from the Low Countries, and calls back to freedom those people whom the Court of Vienna had devoted to slavery." The paper proceeds to say that France does not aim at the permanent occupation of the Low Countries, and that after the close of the war, if England and Holland still attach some importance to the re-closing of the Scheldt, they may put the affair into a direct negotiation with Belgium. If the Belgians, by any motive whatever, consent to deprive themselves of the navigation of the Scheldt, France will not oppose it.

Lord Grenville in his reply to this letter (January 18, 1793)

begins by saying, "I have examined, Sir, with the greatest attention, the paper which you delivered to me on the 13th of this month. I cannot conceal from you that I have found nothing satisfactory in the result of that note." The rest of the letter is either a repetition of the former complaints, or an attempt to extract fresh sources of dispute from the preceding communication. After the exchange of two other unimportant letters, we come to the *dénouement*. On the 24th January, on the news reaching London of the execution of Louis XVI., Lord Grenville transmits to M. Chauvelin the order of the Privy Council, requiring him to leave the country in eight days.

I have given these copious extracts from this most portentous of all diplomatic correspondence, not to exonerate you from the trouble of reading the remainder, for every word ought to be studied by those who wish to understand the origin of the war, but to enable you to form a correct opinion of the *animus* which influenced the two parties. Contrast the conciliatory, the almost supplicatory tone of the one, with the repulsive and haughty style of the other, and then ask—which was bent upon hostilities, and which on peace? Recollect that these correspondents were the representatives respectively of sixteen millions of British and twenty-four millions of French, and then say whether the insolent *de-haut-en-bas* treatment received by the latter could have been intended for any other purpose but to provoke a war. Observe that the more urgent the Frenchman became in his desire to explain away the ground of quarrel, the more resolute was the English negotiator to close up the path to reconciliation;—forcing upon us the conviction that what the British Government really dreaded at that moment was, not the hostility but, the friendship of France.

And, now, a word as to the alleged grounds of the rupture. It must be observed, in the first place, that there is no complaint on our part of any hostile act, or even word being



directed against *ourselves*. The bombastic decree\* of the National Convention—one of the midnight declarations of that excited body—was put prominently in the bill of indictment, but it was never alleged that it was specially levelled at this country. It was aimed at the *governments* of the Continent in retaliation for their conspiracies against the French Revolution. “If you invade us with bayonets, we will invade you with liberties,”—was the language addressed by the orators of the Convention to the despotic powers. That this decree was, however, a fair ground of negotiation by our Government cannot be denied, and it is evident from the desire of the French minister to explain away its obnoxious meaning, going so far even as to admit that “perhaps” it ought not to have been passed, that a little more remonstrance in an earnest and peaceful spirit, would have led to a satisfactory explanation on this point. In fact, within a few months of this time the decree was rescinded.

With respect to the Dutch right to a monopoly of the Scheldt:—if that was really one of the objects of the war, the twenty-two years of hostilities might have been spared; for if there was any one thing, besides the abolition of the slave trade, which the Congress of Vienna effected at the close of the war, to the satisfaction of all parties, and with the hearty concurrence of England, it was setting free the navigation of the great rivers of Europe. Nothing need be said about the remaining question of the inviolability of the territory of Holland, inasmuch as the French minister offered to give us a satisfactory pledge upon that point. I may merely add that the Dutch Government abstained from making any demand upon England to sustain its claim to the exclusive navigation

\* Degree of Fraternity. The National Convention declares in the name of the French nation that it will grant fraternity and assistance to all people who wish to recover their liberty; and it charges the Executive power to send the necessary orders to the generals to give assistance to such people, and to defend those citizens who have suffered or may suffer in the cause of liberty.—19th November, 1792.

of the Scheldt, and wisely so:—for it probably foresaw what happened in the war which followed, when the French, having taken possession of Holland, where they were welcomed by a large part of the population as friends, and having turned the Dutch fleet against us, in less than three years, we seized all the principal colonies of that country, and some of them (to our cost) we retain to the present day.

Whilst through this official correspondence the French Government was endeavouring to remove the causes of war, other and less formal means were resorted to for accomplishing the same end. Attached to the French embassy were several individuals, selected for their popular address, their familiarity with the English language, and their talent in conversation or as writers, who, by mixing in society, and especially that of the Liberals, might, it was hoped, influence public opinion in favour of peace. Amongst these was one who played the chief diplomatic part in the great drama which was about to follow. “The mission of M. de Talleyrand to London,” says M. Lamartine,\* “was to endeavour to fraternise the aristocratic principle of the English constitution with the democratic principle of the French constitution, which it was believed could be effected and controlled by an upper Chamber. It was hoped to interest the statesmen of Great Britain in a revolution imitated from their own, which, after having convulsed the people, was now being moulded in the hands of an intelligent aristocracy.”

Beyond the circles of the more ardent reformers, however, or the society of a few philosophical thinkers, these semi-official diplomatists made very little way. They were coldly, and sometimes even uncivilly treated; as the following incident, in which Talleyrand played a part, will shew. “One evening all the members of the embassy, with Dumont, went to Ranelagh, which was then frequented by the most respectable classes of English society. As they entered, there was a

\* “History of Girondins,” vol. i. p. 197.

murmur of voices—‘There is the French embassy!’ All eyes were fixed on them with a curiosity not mixed with any expression of good-will; and presently the crowd fell back on both sides, as if the Frenchmen had the plague upon them, and left them all the promenade to themselves.”\* This incident occurred before the dethronement of the King in August; and the writer from whom the above is quoted in the “Pictorial History of England,” after labouring through several pages to prove that the French were the authors of the war, refutes himself with great *naïveté* by adding, “The public feeling which would have driven England into a war in spite of any ministry, shewed itself in a marked manner even before the horrors of the 10th August and the massacres of September.”

The feeling in France towards England was the very opposite of this, up to the time when the hostile sentiments of our Government became known, and, even then, there was a strong disposition to separate the aristocracy from the people, and to attribute to the former all the enmity which characterised our policy towards them. Previously to the Revolution, English tastes had been largely adopted in France; and indeed so great was at one time the disposition to imitate the amusements, dress, equipage, &c., of Englishmen, that it had acquired the epithet of *Anglomania*. When political reform became the engrossing thought of the nation, what so natural as that the French people should turn a favourable eye to England, whose superior aptitude for self-government, and more jealous love of personal liberty, they were ready then, as they are now, to acknowledge. Never, therefore, was the sympathy for England so strong as at the commencement of their Revolution. When the Declaration of Pilnitz, and the hostile proceedings of the emigrant nobles at Coblenz in 1791, drew forth the indignant denunciations of Brissot and other orators, and induced some of them to call for war as the only means of putting an end to the clandestine correspondence

\* “Pictorial History of England,” vol. iii. p. 276.

which was carried on between the "conspirators without and the traitors within," no such feeling was entertained towards England; and even after the breaking out of hostilities with this country, so unpopular was the war, that the strongest reproach that one unscrupulous faction could throw upon another was in mutual accusation of having provoked it. This fact was at a subsequent period referred to by Lord Mornington,\* one of Pitt's supporters, as a proof that the British Government at least did not provoke the war. "Robespierre," said he, "imputes it to Brissot; Brissot retorts it upon Robespierre; the Jacobins charge it upon the Girondists; the Girondists recriminate upon the Jacobins; the mountain thunders it upon the valley; and the valley re-echoes it back against the mountain."

"All facts," said Sheridan, with unanswerable force, in reply, "tending to contradict the assertion which the noble Lord professed to establish by them, and making still plainer that there was no party in France which was not earnest to avoid a rupture with this country, nor any party which we may not at this moment reasonably believe to be inclined to put an end to hostilities."

I have said sufficient probably to satisfy you that France did not desire a collision with England; and that the pretexts put forward by Lord Grenville in his correspondence with M. Chauvelin were not sufficient grounds for the rupture. But I will now redeem my pledge, and prove to you, from the admissions of the partisans of the war, that the real motive was to put down opinions in France, or at least to prevent the spread of them in this country.

Parliament, as I before stated, was hastily summoned for the 13th December, 1792. The country stood on the verge of the most fearful calamity that could befall it. But the mass of the people, whose passions and prejudices had been roused against their old enemies the French, did not see the danger

\* January 21, 1794.

before them, and they were ready for a war. At the same time, to quote the words of Sir Walter Scott,\* “the whole aristocratic party, commanding a very large majority in both Houses of Parliament, became urgent that war should be declared against France ; a holy war, it said, against treason, blasphemy, and murder ; and a necessary war, in order to break off all connection betwixt the French Government and the discontented part of our own subjects, who could not otherwise be prevented from the most close, constant, and dangerous intercourse with them.” To add to the excitement, tales of plots and conspiracies were circulated ; additional fortifications were ordered for the Tower of London ; and a large armed force was drawn round the metropolis. Speaking of the efforts that were made to create a panic in the public mind, Lord Lauderdale† at a later period observed :—“ But is there a man in England ignorant that the most wicked arts have been practised to irritate and mislead the multitude ? Have not handbills, wretched songs, infamous pamphlets, false and defamatory paragraphs in newspapers been circulated with the greatest assiduity, all tending to rouse the indignation of this country against France, with whom it has been long determined I fear to go to war ? To such low artifices are these mercenaries reduced, that they have both the folly and audacity to proclaim that the New River water has been poisoned with arsenic by French emissaries.”

It must not be forgotten that at the very moment when all this preparation was being made against an attack from the French, and when this panic in the public mind was thus artfully created, M. Chauvelin was besieging the Foreign Office with proposals for peace, and, when denied admittance at the front door, entered meekly at the back, asking only to know on what terms, however humiliating, war with England might be averted. The public knew nothing of this at the time, for

\* “ Life of Napoleon,” ch. xv.

† February 12, 1793.

diplomacy was then, as now, a secret art ; *but the Government knew it.*

The King's speech, at the opening of the session, began by saying, that having judged it necessary to embody a part of the militia, he had, according to law, called Parliament together. He then alluded to seditious practices and a spirit of tumult and disorder, " shewing itself in acts of riot and insurrection, which required the interposition of a military force." Then followed an allusion to " our happy constitution," which seems a little misplaced in the midst of riot and insurrection ; but the King relied on the firm determination of Parliament " to defend and maintain that constitution which has so long protected the liberties, and promoted the happiness of every class of my subjects." Next, there was a complaint against France for " exciting disturbances in foreign countries, disregarding the rights of neutral nations, and pursuing views of conquest and aggrandisement." The speech then announced an augmentation of the naval and military force, as " necessary in the present state of affairs, and best calculated, both to maintain internal tranquillity, and to render a firm and temperate conduct effectual for preserving the blessings of peace."

The address, in reply to the speech, was carried without a division. The members who were opposed to the war, spoke under the discouraging consciousness that, so far from having that popular support and sympathy which could alone make their opposition formidable, the advocates of peace were in as small a minority in the country as in Parliament. On the first night of the session, after denouncing the panic which had been artfully created, Mr. Fox said, " I am not so ignorant of the present state of men's minds, and of the ferment artfully created, as not to know that I am now advancing an opinion likely to be unpopular. It is not the first time I have incurred the same hazard." And, on a subsequent occasion, in a still more dejected tone, he said,\*—" I have done my duty in

\* December 15, 1792.

submitting my ideas to the House ; and in doing this, I cannot possibly have had any other motive than those of public duty. What were my motives ? Not to court the favour of ministers, or those by whom ministers are supposed to be favoured ; not to gratify my friends, as the debates in this House have shewn ; not to court popularity, for the general conversation, both within and without these walls, has shewn that to gain popularity I must have held the opposite course. The people may treat my house as they have done that of Dr. Priestley—as it is said they have done more recently that of Mr. Walker.\* My motive only was that they might know what was the real cause of the war into which they are likely to be plunged ; and that they might know that it depended on a mere matter of form and ceremony.”

It is impossible to read the speeches of Fox, at this time, without feeling one's heart yearn with admiration and gratitude for the bold and resolute manner in which he opposed the war, never yielding and never repining, under the most discouraging defeats ; and, although deserted by many of his friends in the House, taunted with having only a score of followers left, and obliged to admit† that he could not walk the streets without being insulted by hearing the charge made against him of carrying on an improper correspondence with the enemy in France, yet bearing it all with uncomplaining manliness and dignity. The annals of Parliament do not record a nobler struggle in a nobler cause.

It may naturally be asked, why, with the popular opinions running thus strongly against “French principles,” did the Government resort to such arts as have been described, for

\* A highly respectable inhabitant of Manchester, whose house was assailed by a “Church and King” mob, upon the charge of being a “Jacobin,” or “Republican and Leveller.” His son, who inherits his liberal principles, but whose good fortune it has been to live in times when popular intelligence can discriminate between friends and foes, is an alderman and magistrate of that city.

† February 7, 1793.

creating a still greater panic in men's minds, or where was the motive for going to war with the French Republic? But "the wicked fleeth when no man pursueth." The vaunted "Constitution" of that time was, so far as the House of Commons was concerned, an insult to reason, an impudent fraud, which would not bear discussion; and the "borough-mongers," as they were afterwards called, were trembling lest its real character might be exposed, if people were left at leisure to examine it. What that character was, we have been, with infinite *naïveté*, informed by one of its admirers. "The Government of Great Britain," says Alison,\* "which was supposed, by theoretical observers, to have been anterior to the great change of 1832, a mixed constitution, in which the Crown, the Nobles, and the Commons mutually checked and counteracted each other, was in reality an aristocracy, having a sovereign for the executive, disguised under the popular forms of a republic." Although this Government of false pretences had two extremes of society, the interested few and the ignorant many, on its side; yet there was a small party of parliamentary reformers, who, though stigmatised as "Jacobins," "Levellers," and "Republicans," were active, earnest, and able men, comprising in their body nearly all the intellect of the age; and it was from the chimerical fear that these men would put themselves under the influence of French politicians that the two countries were to be rent asunder by war. Upon this point we have the ingenious avowal of a young statesman, who lived to fill the highest office in the State. Mr. Jenkinson† (afterwards Lord Liverpool), said,—"He had heard it frequently urged that this was a period particularly unfavourable to a war with France, on account of the number of discontented persons amongst us in correspondence with the seditious of that country, who menaced and endangered our government and constitution. That there was a small party entertaining such designs he had

\* Vol. iii. p. 101.

† December 15, 1792.



very little doubt; and, from their great activity, he also considered them as dangerous; but he confessed that this very circumstance, so far from deterring him from war, became a kind of inducement. They might be troublesome in times of peace—they might be tranquil in time of war; for as soon as hostilities were commenced, the correspondence with the French must cease, and all the resource they had would be to emigrate to that country, which would be a good thing for this; or, remaining where they are, to conduct themselves like good citizens, as that correspondence which by law was not punishable now, would in time of war be treason.”

The same motive for the war was at last avowed by him who had performed the part of Peter the Hermit, in rousing the warlike spirit of the nation. Edmund Burke, who from the year 1789, was possessed by a species of monomania upon the French Revolution, took a prominent part in these discussions; indeed, whatever was the subject before the House, if he rose to speak upon it, he was pretty certain to mount his favourite hobby before he resumed his seat. “Let the subject, the occasion, the argument be what it may,” said Mr. Francis,\* “he has but one way of treating it. War and peace, the repair of a turnpike, the better government of nations, the direction of a canal, and the security of the constitution are all alike in his contemplation: the French Revolution is an answer to everything; the French Revolution is his everlasting theme, the universal remedy, the grand specific, the never-failing panacea, the principal burden of his song; and with this he treats us from day to day; a cold, flat, insipid hash of the same dish, perpetually served up to us in different shapes, till at length with all his cookery, the taste revolts, the palate sickens at it.”

At length, on the discussion of the Alien Bill,† Burke’s powers of reason and judgment seemed to be entirely overborne by a frenzied imagination. Drawing forth a dagger and brandishing it in the air, he cast it with great vehemence of

\* May 7, 1793.

† December 28, 1792.

action on the floor: "It is my object," said he, "to keep the French infection from this country: their principles from our minds, and their daggers from our hearts! I vote for this bill, because I believe it to be the means of saving my life and all our lives from the hands of assassins; I vote for it because it will break the abominable system of the modern pantheon, and prevent the introduction of French principles and French daggers. When they smile I see blood trickling down their faces; I see their insidious purposes,—I see that the object of all their cajoling is blood! I now warn my countrymen to beware of these execrable philosophers, whose only object it is to destroy everything that is good here, and to establish immorality and murder by precept and example!"

And on a subsequent occasion,\* immediately after the declaration of hostilities, he declared his fixed opinion that "if we continued at peace with France, there would not be ten years of stability in the government of this country." Thus did he who first sounded the tocsin of war, and led the public mind through each successive phase of hostility, until he triumphed in the deadly struggle which had now begun, avow that the object he sought was to avert the danger with which French principles menaced the institutions of this country.

I must add one extract from a speech delivered by Mr. Windham, the leader of the Whig seceders, who became Pitt's Secretary at War. It was delivered on the 1st February, 1793, the day on which war was declared by France, but before that event was known here. "*He agreed that in all probability the French had no wish at this moment to go to war with this country, as they were not yet ready to do so; their object seemed to be to take all Europe in detail, and we might be reserved to be the last.*" Here the whole case as against ourselves is fully admitted by one of the most determined advocates of the war. It is needless to add, that if we were justified in going to war because *we predicted* that France

\* Feb. 18, 1793.

would attack us at some future time, there never need be a want of justification for a war.

But it is at a somewhat later period that we discover more clearly the real motives of the war as acknowledged by its authors. In 1795, when hostilities had been carried on for two years, with but little impression upon the enemy, and when the cry for peace became general, there was less reserve in avowing the objects for which we had entered upon war. In a speech in favour of peace, Mr. Wilberforce\* said: "With regard to the probable consequences of pursuing the war, he considered them to be in their nature uncertain. *Heretofore it might justly be said to be carried on in order to prevent the progress of French principles*; but now there was much more danger of their being strengthened by a general discontent, arising from a continuance of the war, than from any importation of the principles themselves from France."

On a subsequent occasion, after the government of France had undergone a change, and had passed into the hands of the Directory, and when the British ministry was constrained by the general discontent to make a profession of willingness to negotiate for peace, they were obliged, in order to justify themselves for having formerly advocated war, to point to the altered, and as they alleged more settled, state of the French Government as the cause of the change in their policy. Mr. Pitt† said—"I certainly said that the war was not like others, occasioned by particular insult, or the unjust seizure of territory, or the like, *or undertaken to repel usurpation, connected with principles calculated to subvert all government*, and which, while they flourished in their original force and malignity, were totally incompatible with the accustomed relations of peace and amity. We professed also that many persons in that country felt the pressure of the calamities under which it laboured, and were ready to co-operate for the destruction of the causes which occasioned them."

\* May 27, 1795.

† Dec. 9, 1795.

In the debate in the House of Lords which followed this pacific message from the King a more undisguised statement was made by one who, as a cabinet minister, had the fullest opportunity of knowing the motives of those who entered upon the war. Earl Fitzwilliam\* said :—"The present war was of a nature different from all common wars. It was commenced, not from any of the ordinary motives of policy and ambition. *It was expressly undertaken to restore order in France, and to effect the destruction of the abominable system that prevailed in that country.* Upon this understanding it was that he had separated from some of those with whom he had long acted in politics, and with other noble friends had lent aid to his Majesty's ministers. Upon this understanding he had filled that situation which he some time since held in the Cabinet. *Knowing then on such authority the object of the war to have been to restore order in France,* he was somewhat surprised at the declaration in the message that his Majesty was now prepared to treat for peace."

The Fitzwilliams have always had the habit of plain-speaking, though not of invariably foreseeing all the logical consequences of what they say. Their honesty has, however, been proverbial; and as in this case the speaker went to the unusual length of giving evidence as a cabinet minister against his former colleagues, and was not contradicted, we may take his statement as conclusive proof upon the question in hand. But what must we think of the conduct of the government, and especially of Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville, in having thrown the responsibility of the war upon France upon such pretences as the opening of the navigation of the Scheldt, whilst at the same time we have overwhelming evidence to show that they were determined to provoke a collision for totally different objects? What will be said of it when our history is written by some future Niebuhr? I could multiply quotations of a similar tendency to the above, but I forbear

\* December 14, 1795.

from a conviction that no further evidence is required to prove my case.

But there is one *act* of our government, illustrative of its motives in entering upon the war, which I must not omit to mention. Shortly after the commencement of hostilities (November, 1793) our naval forces took possession of Toulon, when Admiral Hood and the British Commissioners published a proclamation, in the name of the King of England, to the people of France, in which they declared in favour of monarchy in France in the person of Louis XVII. But not a word did they say about the opening of the navigation of the Scheldt or the pretended objects of the war. And about the same time\* the King of England published a declaration to the French nation, in which he promises the "suspension of hostilities, and friendship, security and protection to all those who by declaring for monarchical government shall shake off the yoke of a sanguinary anarchy." It is strange that our government did not see that this was as much an act of intervention in the internal concerns of another people as anything which had been done by the French Convention, and that, in fact, it was affording a justification for every act of the kind perpetrated on the Continent, from the Declaration of Pilnitz to the present moment.

In drawing this argument to a close, I have done nothing but prove the truth of a statement made by a writer who has devoted far more time, labour, and learning to the investigation of the subject than it is in my power to bestow. Considering that he is a partisan of the war, and an admirer of the political system which it was designed to uphold, I cannot but marvel at his candour, which I should the more admire if I were sure that he has fully appreciated the logical consequences that flow from his admissions. The following are the remarks of Sir A. Alison upon the origin of the war:—

"In truth, the arguments urged by Government were not the

\* October 29, 1793.

only motives for commencing the war. The danger they apprehended lay nearer home than the conquest of the Republicans: it was not foreign subjugation so much as domestic revolution that was dreaded if a pacific intercourse were any longer maintained with France. ‘Croyez-moi,’ said the Empress Catherine to Segur, in 1789, ‘une guerre seule peut changer la direction des esprits en France, les réunir, donner un but plus utile aux passions et réveiller le vrai patriotisme.’\* *In this observation is contained the true secret, and the best vindication of the revolutionary war.* The passions were excited; democratic ambition was awakened; the desire of power under the name of reform was rapidly gaining ground among the middle ranks, and the institutions of the country were threatened with an overthrow as violent as that which had recently taken place in the French monarchy. *In these circumstances the only mode of checking the evil was by engaging in a foreign contest, by drawing off the ardent spirits into active service, and, in lieu of the modern desire for innovation, rousing the ancient gallantry of the British nation.”†*

Of the moral sense which could permit an approval of the sentiments of the imperial patroness of Suwarrow, I would rather not speak. But I wish that a copy of this extract could be possessed by every man in England, that all might understand the “true secret” of despots, which is to employ one nation in cutting the throats of another, so that neither may have time to reform the abuses in their own domestic government. I would say on the contrary, the true secret of the people is to remain at peace; and not only so, but to be on their guard against false alarms about the intended aggressions of their neighbours, which when too credulously believed, give to government all the political advantages of a war, without its

\* Believe me, a war alone can change the direction of men’s minds in France, re-unite them, give a more useful aim to the passions, and awaken true patriotism.

† Vol. iv. p. 7.

risks ; for they keep men's minds in a degrading state of fear and dependence, and afford the excuse for continually increasing government expenditure.

One word only upon the objection that the French were the first to *declare* war. In the present case, as in that of the Allied Powers on the Continent, to which we before alluded, we were giving to ourselves all the advantages of a belligerent power by our warlike preparations, without affording to the French the fair warning of a declaration of war. The Government of France acted more in accordance with the recognised law of nations in publishing the reasons why they were, contrary to their own wishes, at war with England. The language and acts of Mr. Pitt were a virtual declaration of war. Half as much said or done by a Prime Minister now would be enough to plunge all Europe in flames. We have seen that the Militia was embodied, and the Parliament suddenly assembled on the 13th December, 1792, when the King's speech recommended an augmentation of the army and navy. On the 28th January, 1793, upon the arrival of the news of the execution of the French king, not only was M. Chauvelin, the French Minister, ordered to leave the kingdom in eight days, but the King's message, which was sent to the House of Commons announcing this fact, recommended a further augmentation of the land and sea forces. This increased armament was not now wanted, as was professed to be the case on the 13th December, for "preserving the blessings of peace," but, to quote the words of the Message, "to enable his Majesty to take the most effectual measures, in the present important conjuncture, for maintaining the security and rights of his own dominions ; *for supporting his allies* ; and for opposing views of aggrandizement and ambition on the part of France, which would be at all times dangerous to the general interests of Europe, but are peculiarly so when connected with the propagation of principles which lead to the violation of the most sacred duties, and are utterly subversive of the peace and

order of all civil society." Once more I must beg your attention to dates. This message was delivered on the 28th January, 1793. Up to this time the French Government had given undeniable proofs of desiring to preserve peace with England. And it was not till after the delivery of this message to Parliament, after a peremptory order had been given to their ambassador to leave England ; after all these preparations for war ; and after the insulting speeches and menaces uttered by Mr. Pitt and the other ministers in Parliament, which, as will be seen by referring to the debates of this time, were of themselves sufficient to provoke hostilities, that the French Convention, by a unanimous vote, declared war against England on the 1st February, 1793.

On the 11th February, the King sent a message to Parliament, in which he said he "relied with confidence on the firm and effectual support of the House of Commons, and on the zealous exertions of a brave and loyal people in prosecuting a [when was war ever acknowledged to be otherwise?] *just and necessary war.*"

The wisdom of the advice of the Czarina Catherine was exemplified in what followed. The war diverted men's minds from every domestic grievance. Hatred to the French was the one passion henceforth cultivated. All political ameliorations were postponed ; Reform of Parliament, a question which had previously been so ripe that Pitt himself, in company with Major Cartwright, attended public meetings in its favour, was put aside for forty years ; and even the voice of Wilberforce, pleading for the slave, was for several successive sessions mute, amidst the death struggle which absorbed all the passions and sympathies of mankind.

And now, my dear Sir, if you have done me the honour to read this long letter, I will conclude with an appeal for your candid judgment upon the merits of the question between us. Recollect that we are not discussing the professional claims of the Duke of Wellington to our admiration. He and his great



opponent were brought forth and educated by the war of the Revolution. They were the accidents, not the cause, of that mighty struggle. The question is—was that war in its origin just and necessary on our part? Was it so strictly a defensive war that we are warranted in saying that God raised up the Duke as an instrument for our protection? I humbly submit that the facts of the case are in direct opposition to this view; and that it is only by pleading ignorance of the historical details which I have narrated that we can hope to be acquitted of impiety in attributing to an all-wise and just Providence an active interposition in favour of a war so evidently unprovoked and aggressive.—And I remain faithfully yours, RICHARD COBDEN.

*To the Rev. ———*

## LETTER III.

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MR. COBDEN TO THE REVEREND — —.

*January, 1853.*

MY DEAR SIR,—I am afraid you do not overstate the case in saying, that not one in a thousand of the population of this country has ever doubted the justice and necessity of our last war with France. There is all but a unanimous sentiment upon the subject ; and it is easily accounted for. The present generation of adults have been educated under circumstances which forbade an impartial judgment upon the origin of the war. They were either born during the strife of arms, when men's hopes and fears were too much involved in the issue of the struggle to find leisure for an historical inquiry into the merits of the quarrel, or after the conclusion of the peace, when people were glad to forget everything connected with the war, excepting our victories and the victors. There are no men now living, and still engaged in the active business of life, who were old enough to form an opinion upon the question, and to take a part in the controversy, when peace or war trembled in the balance in 1792 : and our histories have been written too much in the interest of the political party which was at that time in power to enable our youth to grow up with sound opinions upon the conduct of the authors of the war.

But the truth must be told to the people of this country. I have no fear that they will refuse to hear it. Even were they so disposed, it would not affect the final verdict of mankind upon the question. The facts which I have narrated, together with many more leading to the same conclusion, to say nothing of the reserve of proofs which Time has yet to disclose, will all be as accessible to the German and American historians as

ourselves. Mr. Bancroft is approaching the epoch to which we refer, and can any one who has followed him thus far in his great historical work, and observed his acute appreciation of the workings of our aristocratic system, doubt that, should he bring his industry and penetration to the task, he will succeed in laying bare to the light of day the motives which impelled our government to join the crusade against the revolution of 1789?

But the whole truth must be told, and the public mind thoroughly imbued with the real merits of the case, not as the solution of a mere historical problem, but in the interest of peace, and as the best and, indeed, only means of preparing the way for that tone of confidence and kindness, which everybody, excepting a few hopelessly depraved spirits, believes will one day characterise the intercourse of France and England. For if in science and morals a truth once established be fruitful in other truths, and error, when undetected, be certain to multiply itself after its own kind, how surely must the same principle apply to the case before us!

If England be under the erroneous impression that the sanguinary feud of twenty-two years, which cost her so many children, and heaped upon her such a load of debt and taxation, was forced upon her by the unprovoked aggression of France, it is, I fear, but too natural that she should not only cherish feelings of enmity and resentment against the author of such calamities, but that there should be always smouldering in her breast dark suspicions that a similar injury may again be inflicted upon her by a power which has displayed so great a disregard of the obligations of justice. The natural result of this state of feeling is that it leads us to remind the offending party pretty frequently of the disastrous results of their former attacks, to thrust before their eyes memorials of our prowess, and to warn them from time to time that we are preparing to repel any fresh aggressions which they may be meditating against us.

If, on the other hand, the real origin of the war be impressed upon the mind of the present generation, and it be known, *popularly known*, that, far from having been, as we are told it was, undertaken in behalf of liberty, or for the defence of our own shores, it was hatched upon the Continent in the secret counsels of despotic courts, and fed from the industry of England by her then oligarchial government; that its object was to deprive the French people of the right of self-government, and to place their liberties at the disposal of an arbitrary king, a corrupt church, and a depraved aristocracy; then the opinion of the country, and its language and acts, will be totally different from what we have just described. Instead of feelings of resentment, there will be sentiments of regret; far from suspecting attacks from the French, the people of England, seeing through, and separating themselves from the policy by which their fathers were misled, will be rather disposed to level their suspicion at those who call upon them again, without one fact to warrant it, to put themselves in an attitude of defiance against their unoffending neighbour; and in lieu of constantly invoking the memory of their own exploits, or the reverses of their opponents, the English people will, under the circumstances which I have supposed, be anxious only for an oblivion of all memorials of an unjust and aggressive war.

Can any doubt exist as to which of these conditions of public opinion and feeling is most likely to conduce to peace, and which to war?

But, moreover, the truth must be known in order that the people of England may be the better able to appreciate the feelings of the French towards them. The precept "Do unto others as ye would that others should do unto you," is applicable to thought as well as act. Before we condemn the sentiments entertained by the people of France with respect to our conduct in the last war, let us endeavour to form an opinion as to what our own feelings would be under similar circumstances. To do this we must bear in mind that whilst our historians give us

a flattering and partial account of the conduct of our government at the breaking out of the last war, the French writers, as may naturally be supposed, lose no opportunity of recording every fact which redounds to our disadvantage. I have abstained from giving quotations from these authorities, because they would be open to the charge of being partial and prejudiced. But it ought to be known to us that not only do these writers make the European powers who conspired against the liberties of France responsible for the war, they invariably assign to England the task of stimulating the flagging zeal of the Continental despots, and of bribing them to continue their warlike operations when all other inducements failed. The least hostile of these writers, M. Thiers, the favourite of our aristocracy, in speaking of our preparations for the campaign of 1794, says—"England was still the soul of the coalition, and urged the powers of the Continent to hasten to destroy, on the banks of the Seine, a revolution at which she was terrified, and a rival which was detestable to her. The implacable son of Chatham had this year made prodigious efforts for the destruction of France." It is to the energies of Pitt, wielding the power of England, that France attributes the tremendous coalitions which again and again brought nearly all Europe in hostile array against her. Thus does M. Thiers describe the spirit which animated him: "In England a revolution which had only half regenerated the social state, had left subsisting a crowd of feudal institutions which were objects of attachment for the court and aristocracy, and of attack for the opposition. Pitt had a double object in view; first to allay the hostility of the aristocracy, to parry the demand for reform, and thus to preserve his ministry by controlling both parties; secondly—to overwhelm France beneath her own misfortunes, and the hatred of all the European governments."

These quotations afford but a faint idea of the tone in which the historical writers of that country deal with the subject. We are held up generally to popular odium as the perfidious

and Machiavelian plotters against the liberties of the French people.

But it will probably be asked—and the question is important—what are the *present* opinions of Frenchmen respecting their own Revolution out of which the war sprang? There is nothing upon which we entertain more erroneous views. When *we* speak of that event, our recollection calls up those occurrences only, such as the Reign of Terror, the rise and fall of Napoleon, the wars of conquest carried on by him, and the final collapse of the territory of France within its former boundaries, which seem to stamp with failure, if not with disgrace, the entire character of the Revolution. The Frenchman, on the contrary, directs his thoughts steadily to the year 1789. He finds the best excuse he can for the madness of 1794; he will point, with pride, to the generous magnanimity of the populace of Paris, in 1830 and 1848, as an atonement for the Reign of Terror; he throws upon foreign powers, and especially upon England, the responsibility for the long wars which desolated so many of the countries of Europe; but towards the Constituent Assembly of 1789, and the principles which they established, his feelings of reverence and gratitude are stronger than ever; he never alludes to them but with enthusiasm and admiration. This feeling is confined to no class, as the following extract from a speech addressed by M. Thiers on the 29th June, 1851, to that most Conservative body, the National Assembly, and the response which it elicited, will show. It is taken verbatim, from a report published by himself:—

“*M. Thiers.*—Let us do honour to the men who have maintained in France, since 1789, real civil equality—equality of taxation, which we owe to our admirable and noble Revolution. (*Notre belle et honorable révolution.*)”—(Assent and agitation.)

“*A voice on the left.*—Settle that with your friends. (Oh, oh! murmurs.)

“*A voice on the right.*—Don't mistake; it is not the Revolution of 1848 that is referred to.

"*M. Thiers.*—I speak of the Revolution of 1789, and I trust we are all of one mind upon that. (The left. Yes! yes! laughter.)

"*M. Charras.*—Talk to the right.

"*M. Thiers.*—I have a better opinion than you of my country, and of all our parties, and I am convinced that no one will encounter coldness or disapprobation from any quarter when praising the Revolution of 1789. (Marks of approbation from a great number of benches.)"

There is no greater proof of the predominant favour in which any opinions are held in France than to find them advocated by M. Thiers. But whilst employed upon this letter, a recent production from the pen of my accomplished friend, M. Michael Chevalier, has met my eye, in which he speaks of "the immortal principles" of "our glorious Constituent Assembly of 1789." Where two men of such eminent authority, but of such diametrically opposite views upon economical principles, agree in their admiration of a particular policy, it is a proof that it must have irresistible claims upon public approbation. Men of the highest social position in France—even they whose fathers fell a sacrifice to the Reign of Terror—admit that to the measures of 1789 (they were in substance described in my last letter), which have elevated the millions of their countrymen from a condition hardly superior to that of the Russian serf to the rank of citizens and proprietors of the soil, France is indebted for a more rapid advance in civilisation, wealth, and happiness, than was ever previously made by any community of a similar extent within the same period of time.

This feeling, so universally shared, has not been impaired by the recent changes in France; for it is directed less towards *forms* of government, or political institutions, than to the constitution of society itself. And here let me observe again upon the erroneous notions we fall into as to the state of public opinion in France, because we insist upon judging it by our own standard. Assuredly, if the French have the presumption

to measure our habits and feelings by theirs, they must commit as great blunders. *Our* glory is that the franchises and charters gained by our forefathers have secured us an amount of *personal freedom* that is not to be surpassed under any form of government. And it is the jealous, patriotic, unselfish love of this freedom, impelling the whole community to rush to the legal rescue of the meanest pauper if his chartered personal liberties be infringed by those in power, that distinguishes us from all European countries; and I would rather part with every sentiment of liberty we possess than this, because, with it, every other right is attainable.

But the French people care little for a charter of *habeas corpus*; else, during their many revolutions, when power has descended into the streets, why has it not been secured? and the liberty of the press, and the right of association, and public meeting, have been violated by universal suffrage almost as much as by their emperors and kings. That which the French really prize, and the English trouble themselves little about, is the absence of privileged inequality in their social system. Any violation of this principle is resisted with all the jealousy which we display in matters of individual freedom. It was this spirit which baffled the designs of Napoleon and Louis XVIII., to found an aristocracy by the creation of entails. Now, the Revolution of 1789, besides securing liberty of worship, and establishing probably the fairest system of government taxation (apart from the protective policy of the nation) at present to be found in the world, has divided the rich land of France amongst its whole population. It is these measures, coupled with the abolition of hereditary rank, and of the law of entail, which have chiefly contributed to gain for the Constituent Assembly the gratitude of a people so jealous of privilege, and so passionately attached to the soil. Yet it cannot be too strongly impressed upon our minds that it was against the principles of this very Assembly that Burke, in 1790, launched his fiery declamation, in which we find the



following amongst many similar invectives :—" You would not have chosen to consider the French as a people of yesterday, as a nation of low-born servile wretches, until the emancipating year 1789 ;" and we are equally bound to remember that it was with the intention of overthrowing the system of government established by that Assembly that the despotic powers marshalled their armies for the invasion of France, and when, upon the failure of the attack, we threw the weight of England into the scale of despotism. Having fully realised to ourselves the case of the French people, let us ask—what would be our feelings under their circumstances ?

Why, I fear, in the first place, we should, like them, still remember with some bitterness the unprovoked attack made upon us by the nations of Europe, and that we should be sometimes tempted to call that country in particular "perfidious," which, whilst professing to be free itself, and to have derived its freedom from a revolution, yet joined the despots of the Continent in a coalition against the liberties of another people : we, who have just paid almost pagan honours to the remains of a general who fought the battles of that unrighteous coalition—what would we have done in honour of those soldiers who beat back from our frontiers confederate armies of literally every nation in Christian Europe, except Sweden, Denmark, and Switzerland ? Should we not, if we were Frenchmen, be greater worshippers of the name of Napoleon, if possible, than we are of Wellington and Nelson—and with greater reason ? Should we not forgive him his ambition, his selfishness, his despotic rule ? would not every fault be forgotten in the recollection that he humbled Prussia, who had without provocation assailed us when in the throes of a domestic revolution, and that he dictated terms at Vienna to Austria, who had actually begun the dismemberment\* of our own territory ? Should not we in all probability still feel so much under the influence of former dangers and disasters as to cling for pro-

\* At Valenciennes and Condé.

tection to a large standing army?—and might not that centralised government which alone enabled us to preserve our independence still find favour in our sight? and should we not indulge a feeling of proud defiance in electing for the chief of the state the next heir to that great military hero, the child and champion of the Revolution, whose family had been especially proscribed by the coalesced Powers before whom he finally fell? Yes, however wise men might moralise, and good men mourn, these would, under the circumstances, I am sure, be the feelings and passions of Englishmen—ay, and probably, in even a stronger degree than they are now cherished in France.

What, then, are the results which I anticipate from the general diffusion of a true knowledge of the origin and character of the last French war? In the first place, a more friendly and tolerant feeling towards the French people. The maxim of Rochefoucault, that we never forgive those we have injured, if it be not unjust as applied to individuals, does not certainly hold good with respect to communities. Great nations may be proud, and even vain, but they are ever magnanimous; and it is only meanness which could lead us to visit upon our victim the penalty of our own injustice. Besides, the maxim is not intended to apply, even in individuals, to generous natures, and generosity is the invariable attribute of great masses of men.

But, in the next place, I should expect from a more correct knowledge of our error of sixty years ago, that we shall be less likely to repeat it now. It is certain that the lesson will not be required? Are there no symptoms that we have spirits amongst us who want not the will, if the power and occasion be afforded, to play the part of Burke in our day? He excited the indignation of his countrymen against a republic which had decapitated a King; now our sympathies are roused in behalf of a republic which has been strangled by an Emperor. However inconsistent, in other respects, our conduct at the two epochs may be, we seem in both cases likely to fall into

the error of forgetting that the French nation are the legitimate tribunal for disposing of the grievance. To forget this is indeed a more flagrant act of intervention on our part than was that of our forefathers, inasmuch as, whilst they usurped the functions of twenty-four millions of Frenchmen, we are now in danger of treating thirty-six millions with no greater consideration.

I have said that we are not without imitators of the *Reflections*. A small volume of "*Letters of 'an Englishman,' on Louis Napoleon, the Empire and the Coup d'État reprinted with large additions from the Times*," is lying before me. I know a cynical person who stoutly maintains the theory that we are not progressive creatures; that, on the contrary, we move in a circle of instincts; and that a given cycle of years brings us back again to the follies and errors from which we thought mankind had emancipated itself. And really these *Letters* are calculated to encourage him in his cynicism. For here we have the very same invectives levelled at Louis Napoleon which were hurled at the Constituent Assembly sixty years ago. The style, the language, the very epithets are identically the same. Take a couple of morsels by way of illustration, the one speaking of the Constituent Assembly of 1789, and the other of Louis Napoleon in 1852 :

BURKE, 1790.

"How came the Assembly by their present power over the army : Chiefly, to be sure, by debauching the soldiers from their officers."

"ENGLISHMAN," 1852.

"The banquets to the sub-officers, the champagne, the toasts, and the reviews disclosed a continuity of purpose, and a determination to debauch the soldiery, calculated to open the eyes of all."

So much for a specimen of specific accusation.

Now for a sample of general invective :

BURKE, 1790.

*Speaking of the Constituent Assembly.*

"When all the frauds, impostures, violences, rapines, burnings, murders.

confiscations, compulsory paper currencies, and every description of tyranny and cruelty employed to bring about and uphold this revolution have their natural effect, that is, to shock the moral sentiments of all virtuous sober minds, the abettors of this philosophic system immediately strain their throats in a declamation against the old monarchical government of France."

"ENGLISHMAN," 1852.

*Speaking of Louis Napoleon.*

"A self-convicted perjurer, an attainted traitor, a conspirator successful by the foulest treachery, the purchase of the soldiery, and the butchery of thousands, he must, if not cut short in his career, go all length of tyranny. For him there is no halt, for his system no element of either stability or progress. It is a hopeless and absolute anachronism."

Considering that the result of Burke's declamation was a war of twenty-two years, first to put down the French Republic and afterwards Napoleon Bonaparte, both in the interest of the Bourbons; that the war cost us some five hundred millions of debt; and that the result is this present year, 1853, a Bonaparte, whose family we proscribed, sitting upon the French throne, and the Bourbons, whom we installed at the Tuileries, fugitives from the soil of France; remembering these things, and beholding this not altogether unsuccessful attempt at an imitation of the "Reflections," it does certainly afford a triumph to my cynical acquaintance so far at least as to raise a doubt whether progressive wisdom be an element of our foreign policy. I could give many specimens of declamatory writing from the *Letters* not inferior to Burke in style, and some of them surpassing him in the vigour of their invective. Take the following as an illustration of the lengths to which the writer's vehemence carries him, and let it be borne in mind that these letters have had a far wider circulation than Burke's great philippic, with all its popularity, could boast of. I invite attention to those passages marked by me in italics. "The presidential chair or the imperial throne is set upon a crater; the soil is volcanic, undermined and trembling; the steps are slippery with blood, and the darkening steam of smouldering hatred, conspiracy, and vengeance is exhaling round it. Each

*party can furnish its contingents for tyrannicide, the assassin dogs him in the street, and even at the balls or banquets of the Elysée he may find the fate of Gustavus.* He who has been false to all must only look for falsehood, and is doomed to daily and to nightly fears of mutinies, insurrections, and revenge. Conscience cannot be altogether stifled, and will sometimes obtrude in her horrible phantasmagoria the ghastly corpses of the Boulevards."

Nobody will suppose that I would deny to any one the right of publishing his views upon French or any other politics. So far am I from wishing to restrain the liberty of the press it is my constant complaint that it is not free enough. The press, in my opinion, should be the only censor of the press; and in this spirit I would appeal to public opinion against the evil tendency of these and similar productions. We all know how the strictures of Burke began with criticism, grew into menace, and ended in a cry for war. The "*Englishman's Letters*" are here again an exact counterpart of their great original. The volume contains ten letters, the two first—penned in a style of which I have given specimens—are furious attacks upon Louis Napoleon and his government, with passing condemnations on the majority of the Legislative Assembly, the Orleanists, the bourgeoisie, the peasantry, the soldiers, and the priests; in fact there is hardly any party in France which escapes his vituperation. Next comes letter the third, headed, most appropriately after all this provoking abuse, "*The National Defences*," which subject he discusses with his telling style, and upon the whole with great good sense. Having thus provided against accidents, and ascertained that he was ensconced in something stronger than a "glass house," he resumes his vocation of pelting with the hardest and sharpest words he can find in his copious vocabulary of invective, Louis Napoleon in particular, and all sorts of men in general at home and abroad. After indulging himself in this way through four more letters we come to the eighth, which bears the title—somewhat out of

place in such company—of “*Peace at all price.*” It would seem that Mr. Burritt and Mr. Fry, having taken alarm at the hostile tone of the English press, had set on foot a scheme for counteracting the mischief. Addresses containing assurances of friendship and peace were drawn up in several of our towns, signed by the inhabitants and forwarded to various places in France. This movement, than which nothing could be more amiable, and certainly nothing more harmless, draws down upon the heads of poor Messrs. Burritt and Fry, and the peace party generally, such a volley of vituperative epithets that they might almost excite the jealousy of M. Bonaparte himself. Speaking of the peace advocates, “they require,” says he, “keepers, not reporters. Their place is Hanwell, not the London Tavern, and their chairman should be Doctor Conolly!”

Now in the course pursued by the “Englishman” we have an epitome of the conduct of all such writers. They begin with denunciations of the French Government, they then call for more “defences” as a protection against the hostility which they instinctively feel such language naturally excites, and they end in onslaught upon the advocates of peace because they do not join in the cry.

Before indulging this expensive propensity for scolding, this determination to grumble not only for ourselves but also for thirty-six millions of Frenchmen, it behoves us to ask not only whether any benefit will arise, but whether positive injury may not be done, even to the people we wish to serve, by our uncalled-for interference. It is hardly necessary that I should declare that were Louis Napoleon an Englishman or I a Frenchman, however small a minority of opponents he might have, I should be one of them. That is all I have to say on the matter, for anything more would, in my opinion, be mere impertinence towards the French people, who for reasons best known to themselves acquiesce in his rule. But admitting for the sake of argument all that is said of the tyranny, treachery,

and wickedness of Louis Napoleon be true, those are precisely the qualities in despotic monarchs to which we are indebted for our liberties. Why should not the French be allowed the opportunity of deriving some of the advantages which we have gained from bad sovereigns? Where would our charters and franchises have been if our Johns and Jameses had not ruled and misgoverned? Nobody pretends that the French emperor is quite so bad as our eighth Henry; yet we contrived to owe to him our Protestantism. If half what is alleged against Louis Napoleon be true the French people will have him at a great disadvantage in any controversy or struggle they may be engaged in with him. One thing alone could prevent this—the popularity which will assuredly follow from continued attacks in the English press such as I have just quoted.

But here let me warn you against the belief into which so many fall, that the hostile tone adopted by writers of this country towards the French Government, and the cry of an invasion, have reference to the present despotic ruler of France only. *That* is one of the many shapes which the cry has assumed. But it was first heard when Louis Philippe, the “Napoleon of Peace,” was on the throne. The letter of the Duke of Wellington to Sir John Burgoyne, which has been made the text-book for panic-mongers ever since, was written when the King of the French had given seventeen years’ proof of his pacific policy, and when that representative form of government, *which we are now told was the guarantee of peace*, was still subsisting in France. It made its appearance in 1847, when we were already spending more upon our warlike armaments than in any of the previous thirty years—more by two millions of money than the most terrified invasionist *now* proposes to expend. And yet at that time, and under those circumstances, the cry for more defence against the French was as active, and the clamour against the peace party who resisted it, as strong, as at any later time; and the very

same parties who now advocate increased armaments to protect our shores against Louis Napoleon, were amongst the loudest of those who swelled the panic cry in 1847.

An allusion to the infirmities of a great mind, however painful at the present moment, is rendered absolutely necessary by those who quote the authority of the Duke of Wellington's declining years in favour of a policy which, in my opinion, tends neither to the peace nor the prosperity of the country. At the time of penning his letter to General Burgoyne, the Duke was verging upon his eightieth year. Now, no man retains *all* his faculties unimpaired at fourscore. Nature does not suspend her laws, even in behalf of her favourite sons. The Duke was mortal, and therefore subject to that merciful law which draws a veil over our reason, and dims the mental vision as we approach the end of that vista which terminates with the tomb. But the faculties do not all pay this debt of nature at once, or in equal proportion. Sometimes the strongest part of our nature, which may have been subjected to the greatest strain, declines the first. In the Duke's case, his nervous system, his "iron" characteristic, gave way. He who at forty was incapable of fear, at eighty was subject to almost infantine alarms. This was shown on several public occasions; but on none so strongly as in the provision made by him against an insurrection or a revolution during the Great Exhibition of 1851, when, as is known to those who were in authority, or in connection with that undertaking, he was haunted with terrors which led him to change the entire disposition of the army for the year, to refuse to the household regiments the usual retreat to summer quarters, and to surround the metropolis with troops. No one in the full possession of a vigorous intellect could have possibly fallen into the error of supposing that the moment when all people's minds were wound up by a year's previous agitation to the highest pitch of interest in a holiday exhibition would be chosen for a great and combined political demonstration. Human nature,



and especially English nature, is never liable to be possessed by two such absorbing ideas at the same time. In fact, such a diversion of men's minds from public affairs as the Great Exhibition afforded is precisely that which despots have employed for escaping the scrutiny of their own misgovernment. But, as is well known, at that moment universal political contentment reigned throughout England.

If, however, as was supposed, the Duke's preparations were levelled at the foreigners who were attracted to London, the absence of a calm and vigorous reason is still more apparent. For at that time political propagandism was dead even on the Continent ; their revolutions had failed ; universal reaction had succeeded to democratic fever ; and England was regarded as the only great country in Europe where political freedom was "holding its own." Besides, a moment's clear reflection would have suggested the obvious answer to such fears,—that the red republicans and revolutionists of the Continent were not the persons likely to find the money for paying a visit in great numbers to England. In fact, so great an obstacle did the expense present, that during the whole year scarcely fifty thousand foreigners, European and American, above the average of annual visitors, reached our shores : and it must be evident that, against any dangers, whether of mischief or spoliation, contemplated by foreigners or English on that occasion, a good police force, which was most amply provided by the Commissioners, and not an army, was the only rational provision.

But I appeal from the Duke's advice in 1847 to his own example, when in complete possession of his mental powers, in 1835. He was a member of Sir Robert Peel's government in the latter year which is memorable for having witnessed the lowest military expenditure since the peace. The estimates of that year are always quoted by financial reformers as a model of economy. The Duke was consulted by Sir Robert Peel, and became an assenting party to those estimates.

What was the change of circumstances which warranted so great a revolution in his views in 1847? His letter might lead us to suppose that steam navigation had in the meantime been discovered. Does any one whose memory is unimpaired forget that in 1835 our coasts and narrow seas swarmed with steamers, that our sailing vessels were regularly towed to sea by them, and that we were then discussing the merits of the ports in Ireland from which steamships should start for America? The Duke never afterwards acknowledged that he neglected the defence of the country when he was in power. Nobody, has made such a charge against him. But I and others who have advocated a return to the expenditure of 1835 have been denounced for wishing to leave the country defenceless. I must leave my opponents to reconcile their conduct with the reverence they profess to feel for the authority of the Duke of Wellington.

The Duke's letter has been followed by a shoal of publications, all apparently designed to tempt the French to make a descent upon our shores; for all are, more or less, full of arguments to prove how easily it might be effected. Some of them give plans of our ports, and point out the nearest road to London; others describe in seductive phrases the rich booty that awaits them there. Foremost of these is Sir Francis B. Head, who has given us a thick volume under the title of "*The Defenceless State of Great Britain*;" then we have "*Thoughts on National Defence*," by Vice-Admiral Bowles; "*On the Defence of England*," by Sir C. J. Napier, who tells us that he "believes that our young soldiers pray night and day" for an invasion; "*A Plan for the Formation of a Maritime Militia*," by Captain Elliot; "*National Defences*," by Montague Gore, Esq.; "*Memorandum on the Necessity of a Secretary of State for our Defences, &c.*," by Robert Carmichael Smith; "*The Defence of our Mercantile Sea-ports*," by a Retired Artillery Officer; and amongst a host of others is "*The Peril of Portsmouth*," by James Fergusson, Esq., WITH A PLAN;

commencing most portentously :—" Few persons are perhaps aware that Portsmouth, which from its position and its extent is by far the most important station of the British Navy, is at present in so defenceless a state, that it could easily be taken by a *coup-de-main*, either from the sea or by land. Yet such is the undoubted state of the case, and it is further easy of proof, that if it were to fall into the hands of an enemy, the navy of England would, from that very circumstance, be crippled, as a defenceless element at least, to the extent of one-half its power ; while the hostile occupation of Portsmouth would render the invasion of England as simple and as easy a problem as ever was submitted to the consideration of any military man, &c. &c." Surely the French must have lost all pretensions to their character for politeness, or they would have long ago accepted these pressing invitations to pay our shores a visit !

There are two assumptions running through nearly all these productions. First, that we have made no provision for our defence, and, therefore, offer a tempting prey to an invader ; and next, that the French are a mere band of pirates, bound by no ties of civilisation, and ready to pounce upon any point of our coast which is left unprotected.

The first assumption may be disposed of with a few figures :—we expend every year from fifteen to sixteen millions in warlike preparations ; and we have been, ever since the Duke of Wellington's Estimates of 1835, constantly augmenting the number of our armed forces. In that year they amounted altogether to 145,846—at the close of the last Parliament they stood at 272,481 ;\*† thus showing an addition since 1835 of

\* In addition to this, the army in India amounts to 289,529 men, making altogether 562,010 men. The cost of the Indian army is ten millions, which, added to our fifteen millions, makes £25,000,000—the largest sum paid by any nation for a peace establishment.

† [The army estimates voted for in 1865—6 amounted to £14,348,447, those for the navy to £10,392,224. These estimates showed a considerable reduction on the expenditure in 1860—1, which was for the army £18,013,896, for the

126,635. The following is a detailed list of the increase from official sources :—

*Amount and Description of all the Forces added since 1835.*

Cavalry and Infantry added	20,666
Ordnance Corps	7,263
Sailors and Marines	12,095
Enrolled Pensioners	18,500
Dockyard Battalions (armed and drilled)	9,200
Coast Guard (organised and drilled to the use of Artillery since 1835)	5,000
Irish Constabulary, increase	4,627
Militia increase voted	54,049
	<hr/>
	131,400
Deduct decrease of Yeomanry	4,765
	<hr/>
Total increase since 1835 up to June, 1852	126,635

Thus stood matters at the close of the last Parliament in June. But the cry was still “they come.” The “invasion-ists” renewed their annual autumn clamour; and no sooner had the new Parliament assembled in November, 1852, for the short session, than there was a proposal for a further increase of our “defences.” The government asked for 5,000 additional seamen; 1,500 marines; and 2,000 artillerymen. The money was voted without a division. Mr. Hume, who had seen many of the popular organs of public opinion joining in the cry, contented himself with a protest; and then, in despair of any other corrective, left the cure of the evil to the tax-gatherer:—and I confess for the moment to have shared his sentiments.

The other argument of the invasionists—that France is ready to assail us upon any vulnerable point, will be successful in proportion only to our ignorance of the character and

navy £13,331,668. Since 1859 sums of £2,000,000 and £1,200,000 have been voted for fortifications. The estimates for the Indian army for 1865—6 were £13,754,560 and for the Indian marine charges £538,200.]

condition of the French people, and of the origin and history of the last war. Everything in that country is viewed by us through a distorted and prejudiced medium. We regard France as the most aggressive and warlike country on the Continent, because we have all read of her invasions of other countries, without recollecting that they were in retaliation for an unprovoked attack upon her ;—we view with alarm the enthusiasm of the French people for their army, but we cannot so far enter into their feelings as to know that it springs from gratitude, because “it was the army,” to use the words of the conservative and peace-loving *Journal des Débats* “which represented her with admirable *éclat* on fields of battle—that is to say on the spot to which it was necessary that the whole of France should repair in order to defend the new life which she held from 1789.” Doubtless there is danger to be feared from this predominance of the military spirit, however created—a danger most to be dreaded by France herself: but let it not be forgotten that we helped to plant and water the upas tree, and have no right to charge with our sins those who are destined to live under its shade.

Besides, we must bear in mind that the strength of the army of France is only in proportion to that of other Continental States; and that her navy is always regulated with reference to our own, generally about in the ratio of two-thirds of our force: “We pay England the compliment,” said M. Thiers in the Chamber of Deputies in 1846, “of thinking only of her when determining our naval force; we never heed the ships which sally forth from Trieste or Venice—we care only for those that leave Portsmouth and Plymouth.” “Oh, but,” I sometimes hear it very complacently said, “everybody knows that England is only armed in self-defence, and in the interests of peace.” But when France looks at our 500 ships of war, our 180 war steamers, and hears of our great preparations at Alderney, Jersey, and other points close to her shores, she has very different suspicions. She recalls to mind our conduct in

1793, when, within a twelvemonth after the commencement of hostilities, we had taken possession of Toulon (her Portsmouth) and captured or burnt a great part of her fleet; and when we landed an expedition on the coast of Brittany, and stirred up afresh the smouldering fires of civil war. If *we* are so alarmed at the idea of a French invasion, which has not occurred for nearly eight hundred years, may we not excuse the people of France if they are not quite free from a similar apprehension, seeing that not a century has passed since the Norman Conquest in which we have not paid hostile visits to her shores? The French have a lively recollection of the terrible disasters they suffered from the implacable enmity of our government during the last war. They found themselves assailed by a feudal aristocracy, having at its command the wealth of a manufacturing and mercantile people, thus presenting the most formidable combination for warlike purposes to be found recorded in the world's history; and, knowing as they do that political power in this country is still mainly in the hands of the same class, some allowance must be made for them if they have not quite made up their minds that peace and non-intervention are to be our invariable policy for the future. Taking this candid view of the case, we shall admit that the extent of the preparations in France must be in some degree commensurate with the amount of our own warlike armaments.

I will add a few remarks upon the present state of France as compared with her condition in 1793, and endeavour to form an estimate of the probabilities of a war between her and this country; or rather, I should say, of the prospect of an invasion of England by France: for I will assume the writers and declaimers about this invasion to be in earnest; I will suppose that they really mean an invasion of England, and not a march upon Belgium, or any other Continental State; I will take for granted that we have not now, as was the case in 1792, to deal with false pretences, to cover other designs, and that, in this discussion of a French invasion, we are not witnessing

a repetition of the bold dissimulation on the one side, and gross credulity on the other, which preceded the war of 1793. I will for the sake of argument admit the good faith of those who predict a war with France, and a consequent descent upon our shores : nay, I will go further, and even not call in question the sincerity of that party which foretells an invasion of England without any previous declaration of war.

What are the circumstances of Europe calculated to produce a war? There is one, and only one danger peculiar to our times, and it was foreseen by the present Prime Minister when he thus expressed himself :

“He was disposed,” Lord Aberdeen\* said, “to dissent from the maxims which had of late years received very general assent, that the best security for the continuance of peace was to be prepared for war. That was a maxim which might have been applied to the nations of antiquity, and to society in a comparatively barbarous and uncivilised state, when warlike preparations cost but little ; but it was not a maxim which ought to be applied to modern nations, when the facilities of the preparations for war were very different. Men, when they adopted such a maxim, and made large preparations in time of peace that would be sufficient in the time of war, were apt to be influenced by the desire to put their efficiency to the test, that all their great preparations, and the result of their toil and expense, might not be thrown away. He thought, therefore, that it was no security to any country against the chances of war, to incur great expense, and make great preparations for warlike purposes. A most distinguished statesman† of France had lately emphatically declared in the French Chamber his desire for peace, but he added that to maintain it he must have an army of 800,000 men. And what he (the Earl of Aberdeen) would ask, could be expected from the raising of such a force but war, or national bankruptcy? He therefore dreaded the intention of those who desired such extensive

\* Hansard, vol. 107, p. 704

† M. Thiers.

armaments, notwithstanding the pacific professions they made ; and he could not be at ease as regarded the stability of peace until he saw a great reduction in the great military establishments of Europe. Such should be the great object of all governments, and more especially of the government of this country."

Thus spoke Lord Aberdeen in 1849. The evil has not diminished since that time. Europe has almost degenerated into a military barrack. It is computed by Baron Von Reden, the celebrated German statistical writer, that one half of its population in the flower of manhood are bearing arms. It is certain that in the very height of Napoleon's wars, the effective force of the Continental armies was less than at present. For a long time the cuckoo-cry was repeated "to preserve peace, prepare for war ;" but the wisest statesmen of our age have concurred with the Peace party, that the greater the preparation the more imminent is the risk of a collision, owing to the preponderance which is thereby given in the councils of nations to those who by education, taste, and even interest must be the least earnestly disposed for peace. At this moment a martial tone pervades the Courts and Cabinets, as well as the most influential classes of the Continental States ; and never, even in England, since the war, was the military spirit so much in the ascendant in the higher circles as at the present time. To what then are we to attribute the preservation of peace and the present prospect of its continuance, in spite of this dangerous element, but to the fact that, whilst governments are making unprecedented preparations for hostilities, all the signs and symptoms of the age tend more than ever in the opposite direction? Let us see what are the facts which warrant this conclusion :—

The first safeguard against the employment of these enormous standing armies in foreign wars, is that they are indispensable at home to repress the discontent caused in a great degree by the burden which their own cost imposes on the people. Sir Robert Peel foresaw this result in 1841, when he



said that—“*the danger of aggression is infinitely less than the danger of those sufferings to which the present exorbitant expenditure must give rise.*” Their growing intelligence will render the people every year more dissatisfied with the yoke imposed on them ; and athwart these armed and drilled mechanical tools of despotism may be often heard low mutterings, which will assuredly swell some day into a shout of defiance. Internal revolutions may be safely predicted of every country whose government rests not upon public opinion, but the bayonets of its soldiers. Those internal convulsions are, however, no longer to be feared as the causes of war ; for the world has wisely resolved (and it is one of the lessons learned from the last war) that henceforth every nation shall be left to regulate its own domestic affairs, free from the intervention of strangers. It is true that, whilst during the late revolutionary period, this rule was scrupulously observed towards the Great Powers, it was flagrantly outraged in the case of Hungary, Italy, and Hesse-Cassel, against which acts of injustice to the smaller States the public opinion of the civilised world ought to be brought to bear, unless we are to sit down and acknowledge that the weak are to have no rights, and the strong to be bound by no law. In this change of policy, however, which will certainly be observed towards France, we have a security against a repetition of the offence which led to the last war.

There are not a few persons, especially of the military class, who, ever since the peace, have been haunted with the apparition of the late war, and have advocated a state of preparation calculated to meet as great efforts on the part of France as those put forth by Napoleon himself. They will even go so far as to predict the exact latitude where future Trafalgars or St. Vincents are to be fought, and call for the construction of harbours and basins where our crippled ships may be repaired after their imaginary engagements.\* Now,

\* Such arguments have been gravely urged in the House of Commons by naval men ; and, what is still worse, they have been acted upon.

without laying myself open to the charge of foretelling perpetual peace—for nothing appears more offensive to certain parties—I must say that I think the very fact of the wars of the French Revolution having happened is an argument against their soon recurring again. For even if I take no credit for the lesson which that bloody and abortive struggle affords, if I admit the unteachable character of nations, still Nature has her own way of proceeding, and she does not repeat herself every generation in extraordinary performances of any kind. Alexanders, Cæsars, Charlemagnes, and Napoleons are happily not annual, or even centennial, productions; and, like the exhausted eruptions of our physical globe, they have never been reproduced upon the same spot. Nowhere is the husbandman more safe against a convulsion of nature than when he plants his vines in the crater of an extinct volcano. The very magnitude of the operations of Bonaparte, by forbidding all attempts at rivalry, is rather calculated to check than invite imitation. “The death of Napoleon,” says Châteaubriand, “inaugurated an era of peace; his wars were conducted on so mighty a scale (it is perhaps the only good that remains of them) that they have rendered all future superiority in that career impossible. In closing the temple of Janus violently after him, he left such heaps of slain piled up behind the door that it cannot be opened again.” But I must refrain from these flights of a humane imagination, in deference to those who, whilst hoping and desiring universal and perpetual peace, are yet impatient of any arguments which promise the fulfilment of their aspirations.

Let us then, whilst agreeing upon the possibility of such an occurrence, confine ourselves to a notice of those circumstances in the present condition of France which render a war on her part less likely in 1853 than in 1793. Fortunately she would, in common with every other European state, encounter at the first step all but an insuperable obstacle in the want of money. It is true that, in proportion to her resources, the debt of

France is less now than it was in 1793. But, at the latter epoch she had vast masses of landed property available for the expenses of the war. The church lands, which by some writers were estimated at a fourth of the soil of France ; the confiscated estates of the emigrant nobles ; the national domains, and the national forests : this immense property, although valued by different writers at from five hundred million sterling to double that sum, fell in the course of four years into the hands of the revolutionary Government, and was made by them the basis of a paper money, denominated *assignats*, with which they paid their soldiers, and were enabled to make those gigantic efforts which astonished and terrified the despotic governments of Europe.

There is no doubt that for a time this creation of paper money gave to the French Government all the power which would have been derived from a foreign loan, or the most productive taxes. It seemed in the eyes of the wild theorists of Paris, who were at that time trampling each other down in quick succession in the death struggle for power, that they possessed an inexhaustible mine of riches, and each one resorted to it more freely than his predecessor. For every new campaign, fresh issues of *assignats* were decreed. When war was declared against England, eight hundred millions of francs were ordered to be created. The result is known to everybody. The more plentiful the *assignats* were, the less became their value, or in other words the dearer grew all commodities ; bloody decrees followed, to keep down prices ; but markets were not to be permanently regulated, even by the Reign of Terror. Ultimately, when seven hundred millions sterling of *assignats* had been issued, they fell to one and a half per cent. of their nominal value ; and a general at the head of an army in 1795, with a pay of four thousand francs a month, was in the actual receipt of eight pounds only in gold and silver. But paper money had, in the mean time, enabled the government to overcome Pitt's coalition,

But, in case of a war, in 1853, the French Government would have none of these temporary resources. The domains of the church, the crown, and the aristocracy, divided and subdivided, have passed into the hands of the people. There remain no great masses of landed property to seize for the benefit of the state. The very name of *assignat* conjures up visions of confiscation. In no country in the world is there so great a distrust of paper money as in France. To raise the funds necessary for entering upon a war the Government of France must now impose taxes on the eight millions of proprietors amongst whom the land is parcelled, and by whom the great bulk of the revenue is contributed. As a declaration of war would be followed by an immediate falling off in the receipts of indirect taxes from customs and excise, this defalcation, as well as the extra demand for warlike purposes, must fall upon the land. The peasant proprietors of France, ignorant as they are in many respects, know instinctively all this, and they are, therefore, to a man opposed to a war; and hence it is, that in all Louis Napoleon's addresses to them (and they in the ultimate appeal really govern France), whether as candidate for the Assembly, the Presidency, or the Empire, he has invariably declared himself in favour of peace.

But, I think I hear it objected that the French often made war pay its own expenses. It is true, and to a great extent the foregoing statement explains how it was accomplished. Wherever the French armies went, they carried with them the doctrine of liberty and equality, and they were received less as conquerors than deliverers by the mass of the people; for the populations of the invaded countries, like the French themselves previous to the Revolution, were oppressed by the privileged classes, and ground down to the earth by inordinate and unjust taxation. Everywhere the invaders found great masses of property belonging to the government, the church, and exclusive corporations; and, in some cases, the monastic orders were still revelling in their pristine wealth and luxury.

These great accumulations of property were confiscated for the use of the armies of the "Republic." In some cases considerable sums were transmitted to Paris for the service of the Home Government. Napoleon sent home two millions sterling during his first campaign in Italy; and it is stated that the large amount of specie found by the French in the coffers of the frugal aristocratic government of Berne was of essential service in fitting out the expedition to Egypt.

But how changed is all this at the present time! An invading army, instead of finding governments with a stock of bullion to tempt their cupidity, or a good balance at their banker's, would encounter nothing but debt and embarrassment, which the first shock of war would convert into bankruptcy and ruin; they would find church lands and government domains parcelled among the people; and as any attempt to levy contributions must bring the invaders at once into collision with the mass of the population, it would be found far cheaper and wiser to pay their own expenses than attempt to raise the money by a process which would convert hostilities between governments into a crusade against individuals, where every house would be the battle-ground in defence of the most cherished rights of home, family, and property.

And to increase the difficulty, war itself, owing to the application of greater science to the process of human destruction, has become a much more costly pursuit. So great has been the *improvement* in the construction of horizontal shells and other contrivances in gunnery that even Sir Howard Douglas, who could recount with the utmost complacency the capabilities of Congreve rockets, Shrapnell shells, grape, and canister, seems struck with compunction at the contemplation of this last triumph of his favourite science. But a still greater discovery has been since announced by Mr. Nasmyth, who offers to construct a monster mortar for marine warfare which shall lie snugly ensconced in the prow of a bomb-proof floating steam vessel, and on being propelled against a ship of war the

concussion shall cause an explosion with force sufficient to tear a hole in her side "as big as a church door." Now I attach little importance to the argument that these murderous contrivances will disincline men to war for fear of being killed. When cross-bows were first brought into use the clergy preached against them as murderous. Upon the introduction of the "sight" to assist the eye in taking aim with cannon on board ship the old gunners turned their quids, looked sentimental, and pronounced the thing no better than "murder." But war lost none of its attractions by such discoveries. It is at best but gambling for "glory," and, whatever be the risk, men will always take the long odds against death. But I have great hopes from the expensiveness of war and the cost of preparation, and should war break out between two great nations I have no doubt that the immense consumption of material and the rapid destruction of property would have the effect of very soon bringing the combatants to reason or exhausting their resources. For it is quite certain that the Nasmyths, Fairbairns, and Stephensons will play quite as great a part as the Nelsons and Collingwoods in any future wars, and we all know that to give full scope to their engineering powers involves an almost unlimited expenditure of capital.

Besides, war would now be felt as a much greater interruption and outrage to the habits and feelings of the two countries than sixty years ago, owing to the more frequent intercourse which takes place between them. There is so much cant about the tendency of railways, steam-boats, and electric telegraphs to unite France and England in bonds of peace, uttered by those who are heard, almost in the same breath, advocating greater preparations against war and invasion, that I feel some hesitation in joining such a discordant chorus. But when we recollect that sixty years ago it took from four to six days to communicate between London and Paris, and that now a message may be sent in as many minutes, and a journey be made in twelve hours; that at the former time a mail

started twice a week only for the French capital, whilst now letters may be despatched twice a day; and that the visiting intercourse between the two countries has multiplied more than twenty-fold; recollecting all this, it cannot be doubted that it would be more difficult now than in 1793 to tear the two countries asunder, and render them inaccessible to each other by war. But these are moral ties, which I will not dwell upon. I come at last to the really solid guarantee which France has given for a desire to preserve peace with England.

If you had the opportunity, as I had, of visiting almost daily the great exhibition, you must have observed that whilst England was unrivalled in those manufactures which owed their merit to great facilities of production, and America excelled in every effort where a daring mechanical genius could be rendered subservient to purposes of general utility, there was one country which, in articles requiring the most delicate manipulation, the purest taste, and the most skilful application of the laws of chemistry and the rules of art to manufacturing purposes, was by universal consent allowed to hold the first rank: that country was France. And it must not be forgotten that her preparation for this world-wide competition was made at the time when her trade and manufactures were suffering great depression and discouragement, owing to the want of confidence produced by recent revolution. And yet, notwithstanding this disadvantage, she carried away the highest honours for that class of manufactures requiring the greatest combination of intelligence and skill on the part of the capitalist and artisan, and the production of which is possible only in a country which has reached the most advanced stage of civilisation. Yet this is the people\* who we are told will, without previous

\* It cannot be too strongly impressed upon the mind of the reader that this cry of "*invasion without notice*" was raised when Louis Philippe was still on the throne, as the following extract from a letter of remonstrance addressed by Sir William Molesworth, January 17, 1848, to the editor of the *Spectator*, London newspaper, will plainly show:—

"You say that 'the next attack on England will probably be without notice.



declaration of war, make a piratical attack upon our shores with no more regard for the retributive consequences to their own interests than if they were a tribe of ancient Scandinavians, who when they made a hostile expedition carried all their worldly goods to sea in their war boats with them.

Let me repeat it, if for the dozenth time. Such an opinion would never be put forth unless by writers and speakers who presume most insultingly upon the ignorance of the public. It really should be a question with the peace party whether they could do a better service to their cause than by giving popular lectures upon the actual state of the population of France. And let them not forget when dealing with this invasion cry how the people were told in 1792 that the French were coming to burn the Tower, and put arsenic in the New River to poison the metropolis, at the very moment when, *as we know now*, the French ambassador was humbly entreating our government not to go to war. May not the historian of

5,000 [Frenchmen] might inflict disgrace upon some defenceless post; 500 might insult British blood at Herne Bay, or even inflict indelible shame on the empire at Osborne House! Good God! can it be possible that you, whom I ranked so high among the public instructors of this nation—that you consider the French to be ruffians, Pindarees, freebooters; that you believe it necessary to keep constant watch and ward against them, as our Saxon forefathers did against the Danes and the Nordmen, lest they should burn our towns, plunder our coasts, and put our Queen to ransom? Are you aware that the French are as civilised as ourselves—in some respects intellectually our superiors? Have you forgotten that they have passed through a great social revolution which has equalised property, abolished privilege, and converted the mass of the people into thrifty and industrious men, to whom war is hateful and the conscription detestable? *Are you not aware that they possess a constitutional government, with the forms and practice of which they are daily becoming more and more conversant; that no measure of importance can be adopted without being first debated and agreed to in the Chambers; and that the love of peace and the determination to preserve peace have given to the King of the French a constant majority in those Chambers and kept him in peaceable possession of his throne? Can you controvert any one of these positions?"*

These writers must be judged not by what they now say of Louis Napoleon's designs, but what they said of the French nation when Guizot was Prime Minister under a constitutional king, and *when we were spending two millions more on our armaments than anybody now proposes to spend.*



sixty years hence have a similar account to give of the stories now put forth respecting the intentions of the French people? But I promised to give credit to those writers for sincerity, and I proceed to answer them in that spirit—begging pardon of every Frenchman who may read my pages for dealing seriously with such a topic.

France, as a manufacturing country, stands second only to England in the amount of her productions and the value of her exports; but it is an important fact in its bearings on the question before us, that she is more dependent than England upon the importation of the raw materials of her industry; and it is obvious how much this must place her at the mercy of a power having the command over her at sea. This dependence upon foreigners extends even to those right arms of peace, as well as war, iron and coal. In 1851, her importation of coal and coke reached the prodigious quantity of 2,841,900 tons; of course a large portion of it is imported overland from Belgium; of this, 78,900 tons are specially entered in the official returns as being for *the steam navy*; a frank admission, in reply to our alarmists, that the discovery of steam navigation has given us an advantage over them. The coal imported into France in 1792, the year before the war, amounted to 80,000 tons only. Now in this enormous increase, during the last sixty years, we have a proof of the great development of manufacturing industry; but in consequence of steam power having been applied to manufacturing purposes *since* the latter date, the importation of coal has increased in a far greater ratio than any other raw material. Whilst cotton wool, for instance, has increased seventeen-fold since 1792, coal has augmented more than thirty-fold. This is a most important fact when comparing the two countries: for whilst the indigenous coal and iron in England have attracted to her shores the raw materials of her industry, and given her almost a European monopoly of the great primary elements of steam power, France on the contrary, relying on her ingenuity only to sustain a competition

with England, is compelled to purchase a portion of hers from her great rival.

In the article of iron we have another illustration to the same effect. In 1792 pig iron does not figure in the French tariff; but the importation of iron and steel of all kinds, wrought and unwrought, amounted in that year to 6,000 tons. In 1851 (which was a very low year compared with the years previous to the revolution of 1848) the importation of pig iron amounted to 33,700 tons. And when it is remembered that very high duties are levied upon this article for the protection of the home producer, it must be apparent that its scarcity and high price impose serious disadvantages upon all descriptions of manufactures in France. But the point to which I wish to draw attention is, that so large a quantity of this prime necessary of life, of every industry, is imported from abroad; and in proportion as the quantity for which she is thus dependent upon foreigners has increased since 1792, in the same ratio has France given a security to keep the peace.

But there is one raw material of manufactures, which, in the magnitude of its consumption, the distant source of its supply, and its indispensable necessity, possesses an importance beyond all others. Upwards of two and a half millions of bales of this material are annually attracted across the Atlantic, from the Indian Ocean, or the remotest parts of the Mediterranean, to set in motion the capital and industry of the most extensive manufactures ever known in the world; upon which myriads of people are directly and indirectly employed, who are as dependent for their subsistence on the punctual arrival in Europe, on an average, of seven thousand bales of this vegetable fibre a day, as they would be if their bread were the produce of countries five thousand miles distant from their doors. Tainted as this commodity is to a large extent in its origin, it is undoubtedly the great peace-preserver of the age. It has placed distant and politically independent nations in mutual dependence, and interested them in the preservation of

peace to a degree unknown and undreamed of in former ages. To those who talk glibly of war, I would recommend a visit not merely to that district of which Manchester is the centre, but to the valley of the Seine from Paris to its embouchure, and having surveyed the teeming hive employed upon the cotton manufacture, let them ask what proportion did the capital and labour of those regions bear in 1793 to their present amount and numbers, and what would now be the effect of an interruption to their prosperity, by putting an end to that peace out of which it has mainly grown? Is there any object that could possibly be gained by either country that would compensate for the loss occasioned by one month's suspension of their cotton trade?

The importation of this raw material into France amounted in 1851 to 130,000,000 lbs. In 1792 it was 19,000,000 lbs.; the increase being nearly seven-fold. The consumption of that country is about one-fifth to one-sixth of our own, and it ranks second amongst the manufacturing States of Europe. But the quantities of cotton wool consumed in the two countries afford but an imperfect comparison of the number of people employed, or the value of the manufactures produced; for it is well known that whilst we spin a great part of our cotton into yarns for exportation, and our manufacturers are largely employed upon common qualities of cloths, the French convert nearly all their material into manufactures, a considerable portion of which is of the finest quality. It was stated by M. Thiers,\* in his celebrated speech upon the protective system, that "the cotton industry, which in 1786 represented about a million per annum, represents now twenty-five millions." (I have converted his figures from francs into pounds sterling.) If this be a correct statement, the value of the French productions will be one-half of our own, whilst the raw material consumed is less than one-fifth. I confess I think there is some exaggeration or error in the estimate; but

\* National Assembly, 27th June, 1851.

no doubt can exist of the vital importance of the cotton industry to the prosperity of France ; nor need I repeat that it is wholly dependent upon the supply of a raw material from abroad, the importation of which would be liable to be cut off, if she were at war with a nation stronger than herself at sea.

The woollen and worsted trades of France are of a startling magnitude. I confess I was not aware of their extent ; and have had some difficulty in accepting the official report, which makes the importation of sheep's wool to amount, in 1851, to 101,201,000 lbs., whilst in 1792 it reached only 7,860,000 lbs., being an increase of more than twelve-fold. M. Thiers, in his speech before quoted, estimates the annual value of the woollen cloth made in France at sixteen millions sterling.

But if the rivalry between the two countries in worsted and woollen manufactures leaves a doubt on which side the triumph will incline, there is no question as to the superiority of the French in the next manufacture to which I will refer, and which forms the glory of their industrial greatness ; I allude, of course, to the silk trade, on which the ingenuity, taste, and invention of the people are brought to bear with such success that Lyons and Saint Etienne fairly levy contributions upon the whole civilised world ; I say fairly, because when all nations, from Russia to the United States, bow down to the taste of France, and accept her fashions as the infallible standard in all matters of design and costume, there can be no doubt that it is a homage offered to intrinsic merit. Nothing is more difficult to agree upon than the meaning of the word *civilisation* : but in the general acceptation of the term, that country whose language, fashions, amusements, and dress have been most widely adopted and imitated has been held to be the most civilised. There is no instance recorded in history of such a country suddenly casting itself down to the level with Malays and New Zealanders, by committing an unprovoked act of piracy upon a neighbouring nation. Yet we are told to

prepare ourselves for such conduct in the case of France! Judging by the increase in the importation of the raw material, the French have maintained as great a progress in the silk as any other manufacture. The raw silk imported in 1851 amounted to 2,291,500 lbs., against 136,800 lbs. in 1792, showing an increase of seventeen-fold. In 1792 thrown silk did not figure in the tariff, but it was imported to the amount of 1,336,860 lbs. in 1851. These large importations, added to the supply from her own soil, furnish the raw material for by far the largest silk manufacture in the world.

Instead of singling out any other articles I will put them in a tabular form, including the foregoing, for convenience of reference, drawing your attention to the enormous increase in the importation of linen thread. I regret that I cannot include dye-woods; for, owing to the account having been kept in *value* in 1792, and *quantity* in 1851, no comparison can be instituted.

## IMPORTS INTO FRANCE IN 1792 and 1851.\*

	1792.	1851.
Cotton wool . . . . .	19,000,000 lbs.	130,000,000 lbs.
Olive oil . . . . .	16,000 tons.	31,000 tons.
Sheep's wool . . . . .	7,860,000 lbs.	101,201,000 lbs.
Lead . . . . .	1,010 tons.	26,100 tons.
Linen thread . . . . .	601,500 lbs.	9,421,000 lbs.
Coal . . . . .	80,000 tons.	2,574,000 tons.
Ditto for steam navy .	" "	780,900 "
Coke . . . . .	" "	189,000 "
		<hr/>
		Total, 2,841,900 tons.
Pig iron . . . . .	nil.	33,700 "
(wrought iron and steel)		
	6,000 tons.	
Sulphur . . . . .	3,876 "	28,315 tons.
Saltpetre . . . . .	270 "	8,673 "
Zinc . . . . .	10 "	13,480 "
Raw silk . . . . .	136,800 lbs.	2,291,500 lbs.
Thrown silk . . . . .	nil.	1,336,860 "

\* See Note on opposite page.

I have confined myself, in the foregoing accounts, to the imports of those articles which are required for manufacturing purposes, because I wish to point out the extent to which France is an industrial nation, and also the degree of her dependence on foreign trade for the raw material of her manufactures. I have said elsewhere, that whilst governments are preparing for war, all the tendencies of the age are in the opposite direction; but that which most loudly and constantly thunders in the ears of emperors, kings, and parliaments, the stern command, "You shall not break the peace," is the multitude which in every country subsists upon the produce of labour *employed on materials brought from abroad*. It is the gigantic growth which this manufacturing system has attained that deprives former times of any analogy with our own: and is fast depriving of all reality those pedantic displays of diplomacy and those traditional demonstrations of armed force, upon which peace or war formerly depended.

The tabular statement shows that France has entered upon this industrial career with all the ardour which she displayed in her military enterprises, and with the prospect of gaining more durable and useful triumphs than she won in the battle-

\* IMPORTS INTO FRANCE IN 1865.

Cotton wool . . . . .	200,578,400 lbs. (1)
Olive oil . . . . .	30,934 tons (2)
Sheep's wool . . . . .	162,058,600 lbs.
Lead . . . . .	36,232 tons.
Linen thread . . . . .	9,532,600 lbs,
Coal . . . . .	6,265,000 tons.
Ditto for steam navy in 1864 . . . . .	74,497 „
Coke . . . . .	715,835 „
Pig iron . . . . .	169,535 „
Sulphur . . . . .	39,720 „
Saltpetre . . . . .	1,011 „
Zinc . . . . .	31,868 „
Raw silk . . . . .	8,100,400 lbs.
Thrown silk . . . . .	2,131,800 „

(1) The figures have been converted from kilogrammes into lbs.

(2) Ton of 1,000 kilogrammes.

field. I have given the quantities imported, in preference to the prices, because the mode of valuation frequently makes price a delusive index to quantity. I may add, however, that the statistical summary of the trade of France for 1851, published by authority, makes the declared value of the imports and exports amount together to 2,614 millions of francs, or £104,560,000; of which the exports are put down at £60,800,000, and the imports £43,760,000. But that which I would particularly allude to is the fact that, of all the countries to which their exports are sent, England stands first. "Pour l'exportation, l'Angleterre se présente en première ligne." "It appears that the exports of all kinds (French and foreign produce) to England amounted to 354 millions of francs, or £14,160,000; whilst the exports of French produce were 278 millions of francs, or £11,120,000, being 20 per cent. increase upon the previous year. I do not know the mode of valuing the French exports; it is evident that their prices do not correspond with the valuation at our custom house.\*† That, however, does not affect the question of proportions; and it appears that out of a total of £60,800,000 of exports in 1851, England took £14,160,000, or nearly one-fourth. It might be worth while to ask the honest people who sold us so large an amount of commodities, what they would have to say to the five or ten thousand French marauders, who, we are told, are to precipitate themselves upon our shores some morning, and for the sake of a few hours' plunder, to convert twenty-eight millions of people from their best customers into formidable and avenging enemies.

But I must not omit to notice the part performed by the metropolis of France in the great industrial movement of that

\* *Our official* value of French exports to this country for 1851 is £8,033,112.

† [In 1863 the real value of French exports of all kinds amounted to 3,526 millions of francs, of which 834 millions were sent to England. The real value of the exports of French produce amounted to 2,642 millions of francs, of which 620 millions were sent to England.]

country. A most interesting report upon the manufactures of Paris, by my esteemed friend M. Horace Say, has been published, and for which he has received the statistical medal of the Academy of Sciences. It appears that its population has doubled since 1793, and that, including its faubourgs. it contains at present 1,200,000 inhabitants. Few people are aware that Paris contains a greater number of manufacturing operatives than any other city in the world. It appears that there are employed altogether in the various processes of manufacture in that city 407,344 persons, of whom 64,816 are employers of labour, or persons working on their own account, and 342,530 in the receipt of wages; of the latter, 205,000 are men and 137,000 are women and children; and the annual produce of their labour amounts to £58,000,000 sterling. It is estimated by M. Say that 40,000 of these work-people are employed in producing articles directly for exportation. A war with England would not only interrupt the labour of these last, but, by intercepting the supply of raw materials, such as the wood used in cabinet making, &c., and obstructing the export of their productions, would plunge the whole of that excitable metropolis into confusion and misery. It is fortunate for humanity that the interests of so influential a community are on the side of peace, and we may safely leave the *blouses* of Paris to deal with the 500 French pirates who, in the imagination of the *Spectator*, were to carry off the Queen from Osborne.

Having thus seen that France is, with the sole exception of ourselves, the greatest manufacturing country in the world, and that in some branches she excels us,—having also seen that in so far as she requires a supply from abroad of coal and iron, she is in greater dependence upon foreigners for the raw materials of her industry than even ourselves, I now come to her navigation; and here in the facts of her mercantile tonnage we shall find a remarkable contrast to the great development of her manufactures; a fact which ought to give ample



assurance to a maritime state like England or America against a wanton attack at her hands.

I give below an account of the navigation of France to all parts of the world, and to the fisheries, in 1792 and 1851 :—

ARRIVALS. 1792.		} Together
8,229 Ships . . .	799,458 Tons.	
DEPARTURES.		} 1,442,129 Tons.
7,688 Ships . . .	642,671 Tons.	

ARRIVALS. 1851.		} 1,974,968 Tons.
9,175 Ships . . .	924,465 Tons.	
DEPARTURES.		} Increase about 40 per cent.
9,735 Ships . . .	1,032,503 Tons.	

Thus, whilst, as we have seen, the importations of raw materials for her manufactures have increased in some cases twenty-fold, her mercantile tonnage has not augmented more than 40 per cent., or less than one-half.\* The increased tonnage, required for this large additional supply of commodities, has chiefly gone to swell the mercantile marines of other countries ; as the following figures will show :—

#### FOREIGN TONNAGE ENGAGED IN THE FRENCH TRADE.

DEPARTURES.	
1787† . . . . .	532,687 Tons.
1851—12,720 Ships . . . . .	1,510,403 Tons.
Increase about 180 per cent.	

\* [Navigation of the external commerce of France in 1865, fisheries included :—

	Ships. (1)	Tons.
Arrivals . . . . .	28,718	4,999,000
Departures . . . . .	22,073	3,589,000
Total . . . . .	50,791	8,588,000
Share of Foreign Ships :—		
Arrivals . . . . .	17,486	3,016,000
Departures . . . . .	12,471	1,943,000
Total . . . . .	29,957	4,959,000

(1) Vessels with cargoes. Those in ballast, the returns of which are not known for 1865, would, if added, increase the amount nearly a third especially that of the departures.] C,

† This is the only report near this date which I can find.

It will be here seen how much greater the increase of foreign than French tonnage has been in the trade of France ; a fact which, I may add, ought to make her statesmen doubt the wisdom of the protective system, by which they have sought to cherish their mercantile navy.

The return of the tonnage of British vessels entering inwards and clearing outwards in 1851 is as follows :‡—

INWARDS.  
1851—4,388,245 Tons.

OUTWARDS.  
4,147,007 Tons.

Our Custom House records for 1792 were destroyed by fire. But it appears that our tonnage has doubled since 1803. It is, however, in our steam vessels that we have made the greatest relative progress as compared with the French. It was stated by Mr. Anderson, in the House of Commons, that for every horse-power possessed by the French, we had twenty ; and yet we are told that the discovery of steam navigation has conferred a great advantage upon France.

The strength of a people at sea has invariably been measured by the extent of their mercantile marine. Judged by this test, there is not even a doubt as to whether England or France be the first naval power. In fact, the French themselves do not question it. It is frankly acknowledged in our favour by M. Thiers, in his speech to the Assembly from which I have before quoted. Nobody in that country has ever pretended that they can, or ought to, keep more than two-thirds of our force at sea. Their public men never believed in the sincerity of our cry of invasion. One of the most eminent of them wrote to me in 1848, and after a frank

‡ [The total tonnage of British vessels entering inwards and clearing outwards in 1864 was 18,201,675 tons. In 1864, there were 26,142 sailing vessels, and 2,490 steamers, registered in the ports of the United Kingdom. The total tonnage was 5,427,500 tons. In 1863 the French mercantile navy comprised 15,092 vessels, including 345 steamers ; the total tonnage was 985,235 tons. To arrive at a fair comparison, 300,000 tons should be deducted from the British tonnage, being the increase in 1864.]

confession of the deplorable state of their mercantile tonnage, as compared with ours, complained of the cry as a cruel joke, "une mauvaise plaisanterie." Intelligent men in that country cannot believe that we think them capable of such folly, nay madness, as to rush headlong, without provocation, and without notice, into a war with the most powerful nation in the world, before whose very ports the raw materials of their manufactures pass, the supply of which, and the consequent employment and subsistence of *millions* of their population, would be immediately cut off, to say nothing of the terrible retribution which would be visited upon their shores, whilst all the world would be calling for the extermination of a community which had abdicated its civilised rank, and become a mere band of lawless buccaneers. No, they cannot think so badly of themselves as to believe that others, whose opinion they respect, would ever give them credit for such wickedness or insanity.

But I shall be told that the people of France are entirely at the mercy of one man, and that public opinion is now powerless in that country. There is nothing about which we make such mistakes as in passing judgment upon our next neighbour. *Public opinion is as omnipotent there as in the United States, upon matters with which it interests itself*; but it takes a different direction from our own, and therefore we do not appreciate it. But it is quite necessary that the people, I mean the mass of our people, should be better informed as to the character and circumstances of the population of France. Teach Englishmen to despise another nation, and you have gone far towards making them quarrel; and there is nothing so sure to evoke our contempt as to be told that a people have not spirit to maintain their rights against the arbitrary will of a usurper. Now, no people have ever clung with more tenacity to the essential principles and main objects of a revolution than have the French. The chief aim of the Constituent Assembly of 1789 was to uproot feudalism; to found an equal

system of taxation ; and to establish religious equality and freedom of worship, by appropriating to the State the lands and tithes of the Church, and making *all religions* a charge upon the public revenues ; very many other reforms were effected by that body, but these were its leading principles. The abolition of the monarchy was never contemplated by the Constituent Assembly. The death of Louis (which I attribute to the interference of foreign powers) was decreed by the National Convention three years later.

Now, the principles of 1789 have been maintained, and maintained by public opinion only, with more jealousy than we have shown in guarding our Bill of Rights, or Habeas Corpus Act ; for the latter has been suspended, whenever it suited the convenience of Tory or even Whig governments. But Napoleon at the head of his victorious legions, the Bourbons with a reactionary priesthood at their back, and the present ruler with all the advantages of a socialist hobgoblin to frighten people into his arms, have been compelled to own allegiance to these principles. Insidious attempts have been made to plant anew the genealogical tree, by the creation of *majorats*, but the schemes were nipped in the bud by public opinion, and *public opinion only*.

When told that the present Emperor possesses absolute and irresponsible power, I answer by citing three things which he could not, if he would, accomplish ; he could not endow with lands and tithes one religion as the exclusively paid religion of the State, although he selected for the privilege the Roman Catholic Church, which comprises more than nine-tenths of the French people ; he could not create an hereditary peerage, with estates entailed by a law of primogeniture ; and he could not impose a tax on successions, which should apply to personal property only, and leave real estate free. Public opinion in France is an insuperable obstacle to any of these measures becoming law ; because they outrage that spirit of *equality* which is the sacred and inviolable principle of 1789.

Now, if Louis Napoleon were to declare his determination to carry these three measures, *which are all in full force in England*, as a part of his imperial regime, his throne would not be worth twenty-four hours' purchase; and nobody knows this better than he and they who surround him. I am penning these pages in a maritime county. Stretching from the sea, right across to the verge of the next county, and embracing great part of the parish in which I sit, are the estates of three proprietors, which extend in almost unbroken masses for upwards of twenty miles. The residence of one of them is surrounded with a walled park ten miles in circumference. Not only could not Louis Napoleon create three such entailed estates in a province of France, but were he to declare himself favourable to such a state of things, it would be fatal to his popularity. Public opinion, by which alone he reigns, would instantly abandon him. Yet this landed system flourishes in all our counties, without opposition or question. And why? The poorest cottager on these estates feels that his personal liberty is sacred, and he cares little for equality; and here I will repeat, that I would rather live in a country where this feeling in favour of individual freedom is jealously cherished, than be, without it, in the enjoyment of all the principles of the French Constituent Assembly.

Let us, however, learn to tolerate the feelings and predilections of other people, even if they are not our own; and recollect, we require the same consideration at their hands, for I can vouch from actual experience that the intelligent natives of France, Italy, and other countries, where the Code Napoleon is in force, and where, consequently, the land is divided amongst the people, are very much puzzled to understand how the English submit to the feudal customs which still find favour here. But I have never found with them a disposition to dogmatise, or insist upon making their system our model. I must, however, say that we are egregiously mistaken if we fall into the belief, so much inculcated by certain parties,

that we are the admiration and envy of surrounding nations. Tell the eight millions of landed proprietors in France that they shall exchange their lot with the English people, where the labourer who cultivates the farm has no more proprietary interest in the soil than the horses he drives, and they will be stricken with horror ; and vain will it be to promise them as a compensation, Habeas Corpus Acts, or the right of public meetings—you might as well ask them to exchange their little freeholds for a *bon mot*, or a song. Let us then spare our pity where people are contented ; and withhold our contempt from a nation who hold what *they* prize by the vigilant exercise of public opinion.

But the point to which I wish to bring the foregoing argument is, as you will at once see, that where public opinion is thus able to guard great principles which make war upon privilege of every kind, it is surely not to be despised in such a question as entering upon hostilities with England. Nobody, I believe, denies that Louis Napoleon received the votes of a majority of the French people. In the election which took place for the presidency, when he was supported by three-fourths of the electors, his opponent General Cavaignac had possession of the ballot boxes, and there could be no fraud to account for the majority. With what view did the French people elect him Emperor ? To maintain, in the first place, as he is pledged to do, the principles of 1789 ; and, in the next, to preserve order, keep the peace, and enable them to prosper. Nobody denies that these are the objects desired by France. Yet we are told that he will, regardless of public opinion, plunge the country into war. The same parties who make this charge accuse him of keeping up  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cents. to 105, by all sorts of nefarious means, in order to maintain an artificial show of prosperity. And this same person, we are told, will make a piratical attack upon England, which would in twenty-four hours bring the  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cents. down to 50, in three months to 30, and in three years to nothing ! Last year, we are told,

was very inimical to the *mental* health of the country, owing to the want of electricity : are these invasionist writers under the influence of this meteorological phenomenon ?

But the army ! The army, we are told, will compel the Emperor to make war upon somebody. I should humbly submit if they wish to fight, and are not particular about a quarrel, or a declaration of war, that they had better march upon Holland, Prussia, or Belgium, inasmuch as they *could* march there, and, what is equally important, in the combinations of a good general, they could march *back again*. If our Government had any fear of the kind, it is quite evident that they would bring to our shores that immense fleet which is amusing itself in the Mediterranean, and which it would take at least a month to recall. There can be no doubt, if an invasion took place, and it could be proved that the Government had expected it, that the Ministers would be impeached. But they keep a fleet, more powerful than the whole American navy, two thousand miles off at Malta, and therefore we may be sure at least that they have no fears.

Now, as I have already said, the army of France, about which we hear so much, is no larger in proportion to her population, than the armies of the other powers of Europe, with which she is surrounded ; and, inasmuch as that country was invaded, without provocation, by Prussia and Austria, within the memory of man, it is rather unreasonable to ask her to be the first and only country to disarm. Besides, a large part of her army is in Algiers, surrounded by hostile tribes ; and, by the way, when that colony was first seized, we used to console ourselves that owing to that part of the army being liable to be cut off by the sea, and offered as a sacrifice to the neighbouring tribes, we had obtained a great security for peace. But, in a word, everybody who is acquainted with France (and they are unhappily in this country but few in number) knows that the army is not, like ours, fished out of the lees of society, but that it fairly represents the people. It

is, in fact, 400,000 of the young men taken 80,000 a year from the farms, shops, and manufactories, and to which they return at the end of their service; and, such being their origin and destination, their feelings and opinions are identical with those of their countrymen.

The French soldier is anxious for the time of his service to expire, that he may return to his little family estate. The discipline and the morale of the army is perfect; but the conscription is viewed with disfavour, as may be known by the price (from £60 to £80), which is paid for a substitute; and anything which tended to prolong the period of service, or increase the demand for men, would be regarded as a calamity by the people. I have never heard but one opinion—that the common soldiers share in the sentiments of the people at large, and do not want a war. But then the officers! Surely after Louis Napoleon's treatment of the African generals, stealing them out of their warm beds in the night, he will not be any longer supposed to be ruled by the officers. His dependence is mainly upon the peasant proprietors, from whom the mass of the army is drawn.

But I must draw this long letter to a close—What then is the practical deduction from the facts and arguments which I have presented? Why, clearly, that conciliation must proceed from ourselves. The people of this country must first be taught to separate themselves in feeling and sympathy from the authors of the late war, which was undertaken to put down principles of freedom. When the public are convinced, the Government will act; and one of the great ends to be attained is an amicable understanding, if not a formal convention, between the two Governments, *whatever their form may be*, to prevent that irrational rivalry of warlike preparations which has been lately and is still carried on. One word of diplomacy exchanged upon this subject between the two countries will change the whole spirit of the respective governments. But this policy, involving a



reduction of our warlike expenditure, will never be inaugurated by an aristocratic executive, until impelled to it by public opinion. Nay, as in the case of the repeal of the corn law—*no minister can do it, except when armed by a pressure from without.*

I look to the agitation of the peace party to accomplish this end. It must work in the manner of the League, and preach common sense, justice, and truth, in the streets and market-places. The advocates of peace have found in the *peace congress* movement a common platform, to use an Americanism, on which all men who desire to avert war, and all who wish to abate the evil of our hideous modern armaments, may co-operate without compromising the most practical and “moderate” politician, or wounding the conscience of my friend Mr. Sturge, and his friends of the Peace Society—upon whose undying religious zeal, more than all besides, I rely for the eventual success of the peace agitation. The great advance of this party, within the last few years, as indicated most clearly by the attacks made upon them, which like the spray dashed from the bows of a vessel, mark their triumphant progress, ought to cheer them to still greater efforts.

But the most consolatory fact of the times is the altered feelings of the great mass of the people since 1793. *There* lies our great advantage. With the exception of a lingering propensity to strike for the freedom of some other people, a sentiment partly traceable to a generous sympathy, and in some small degree, I fear, to insular pride and ignorance, there is little disposition for war in our day. Had the popular tone been as sound in 1792, Fox and his friends would have prevented the last great war. But for this mistaken tendency to interfere by force in behalf of other nations there is no cure but by enlightening the mass of the people upon the actual condition of the Continental populations. This will put an end to the supererogatory commiseration which is sometimes lavished upon them, and turn their attention to the defects of

their own social condition. I have travelled much, and always with an eye to the state of the great majority, who everywhere constitute the toiling base of the social pyramid ; and I confess I have arrived at the conclusion that there is no country where so much is required to be done before the mass of the people become what it is pretended they are, what they ought to be, and what I trust they will yet be, as in England. There is too much truth in the picture of our social condition drawn by the Travelling Bachelor \* of Cambridge University, and lately flung in our faces from beyond the Atlantic, to allow us any longer to delude ourselves with the idea that we have nothing to do at home, and may therefore devote ourselves to the elevation of nations of the Continent. It is to this spirit of interference with other countries, the wars to which it has led, and the consequent diversion of men's minds (upon the Empress Catherine's principle) from home grievances, that we must attribute the unsatisfactory state of the mass of our people.

But to rouse the conscience of the people in favour of peace, the whole truth must be told them of the part they have played in past wars. In every pursuit in which we embark, our energies carry us generally in advance of all competitors. How few of us care to remember that, during the first half of the last century, we carried on the slave-trade more extensively than all the world besides ; that we made treaties for the exclusive supply of negroes ; that ministers of state, and even royalty were not averse to profit by the traffic. But when Clarkson (to whom fame has not yet done justice) commenced his agitation against this vile commerce, he laid the sin at the door of the nation ;

\* Mr. Kay, in his valuable work on the education and social condition of the people of the Continent, offers this sad reflection in speaking of the state of things at home :—“ Where the aristocracy is richer and more powerful than that of any other country in the world, the poor are more oppressed, more pauperised, more numerous in comparison to the other classes, more irreligious, and very much worse educated than the poor of any other European nation, solely excepting uncivilised Russia and Turkey, enslaved Italy, misgoverned Portugal, and revolutionised Spain.”

he appealed to the conscience of the people, and made the whole community responsible for the crimes which the slave-traders were perpetrating with their connivance; and the eternal principles of truth and humanity, which are ever present in the breasts of men, however they may be for a time obscured, were not appealed to in vain. We are now, with our characteristic energy, first and foremost in preventing, *by force*, that traffic which our statesmen sought to monopolise a century ago.

It must be even so in the agitation of the peace party. They will never rouse the conscience of the people, so long as they allow them to indulge the comforting delusion that they have been a peace-loving nation. We have been the most combative and aggressive community that has existed since the days of the Roman dominion. Since the revolution of 1688 we have expended more than fifteen hundred millions of money upon wars, not one of which has been upon our own shores, or in defence of our hearths and homes. "For so it is," says a not unfriendly foreign critic,\* "other nations fight at or near their own territory: the English everywhere." From the time of old *Froissart*, who, when he found himself on the English coast, exclaimed that he was among a people who "loved war better than peace, and where strangers were well received," down to the day of our amiable and admiring visitor, the author of the *Sketch Book*, who, in his pleasant description of *John Bull*, has portrayed him as always fumbling for his cudgel whenever a quarrel arose among his neighbours, this pugnacious propensity has been invariably recognised by those who have studied our national character. It reveals itself in our historical favourites, in the popularity of the mad-cap Richard, Henry of Agincourt, the belligerent Chatham, and those monarchs and statesmen who have been most famous for their warlike achievements. It is displayed in our fondness

\* "A Residence at the Court of London." By Richard Rush, Minister from the United States.

for erecting monuments to warriors, even at the doors of our marts of commerce ; in the frequent memorials of our battles, in the names of bridges, streets, and omnibuses ; but above all in the display which public opinion tolerates in our metropolitan cathedral, whose walls are decorated with bas-reliefs of battle scenes, of storming of towns, and charges of bayonets, where horses and riders, ships, cannon and musketry, realise by turns, in a Christian temple, the fierce struggle of the siege and the battle-field. I have visited, I believe, all the great Christian temples in the capitals of Europe ; but my memory fails me, if I saw anything to compare with it. Mr. Layard has brought us some very similar works of art from Nineveh, but he has not informed us that they were found in Christian churches.

Nor must we throw on the aristocracy the entire blame of our wars. An aristocracy never governs a people by opposing their ruling instincts. In Athens a lively and elegant fancy was gratified with the beautiful in art. In Genoa and Venice, where the population were at first without territory, and consequently where commerce was the only resource, the path to power was on the deck of their merchantmen or on 'Change. In England, where a people possessing a powerful physical organisation and an unequalled energy of character were ready for projects of daring and enterprise, an aristocracy perverted these qualities to a century of constantly recurring wars. The peace party of our day must endeavour to turn this very energy to good account in the same spirit in which Clarkson turned a nation of man-stealers into a society of determined abolitionists. Far from wishing to destroy the energy, or even the combativeness which has made us such fit instruments for the battle-field, we shall require these qualities for abating the spirit of war and correcting the numberless moral evils from which society is suffering. Are not our people uneducated—juvenile delinquents uncared for? Does not drunkenness still reel through our streets? Have we not to battle with vice, crime, and their parent, ignorance, in every form? And

may not even charity display as great energy and courage in saving life as was ever put forth in its destruction?

A famine fell upon nearly one half of a great nation. The whole world hastened to contribute money and food. But a few courageous men left their homes in Middlesex and Surrey and penetrated to the remotest glens and bogs of the west coast of the stricken island, to administer relief with their own hands. To say that they found themselves in the valley of the shadow of death would be but an imperfect image: they were in the charnel-house of a nation. Never since the eleventh century did pestilence, the gaunt handmaid of famine, glean so rich a harvest. In the midst of a scene which no field of battle ever equalled in danger, in the number of its slain, or the sufferings of the surviving, these brave men moved as calm and undismayed as though they had been in their own homes. The population sank so fast that the living could not bury the dead. Half-interred bodies protruded from the gaping graves. Often the wife died in the midst of her starving children, whilst the husband lay a festering corpse by her side. Into the midst of these horrors did our heroes penetrate, dragging the dead from the living with their own hands, raising the head of famishing infancy, and pouring nourishment into parched lips from which shot fever-flames more deadly than a volley of musketry. Here was courage! No music strung the nerves; no smoke obscured the imminent danger; no thunder of artillery deadened the senses. It was cool self-possession and resolute will, calculated risk and heroic resignation. And who were these brave men? To what "gallant" *corps* did they belong? Were they of the horse, foot, or artillery force? They were Quakers from Clapham and Kingston! If you would know what heroic actions they performed you must inquire from those who witnessed them. You will not find them recorded in the volume of reports published by themselves, for Quakers write no bulletins of their victories.

Will you pardon me if, before I lay down my pen, I so far

presume upon your forbearance as to express a doubt whether the eagerness with which the topic of the Duke of Wellington's career was so generally selected for pulpit manifestations was calculated to enhance the influence of ministers of the Gospel, or promote the interests of Christianity itself. Your case and that of public mēn are very dissimilar. The mere politician may plead the excuse if he yields to the excitement of the day that he lives and moves and has his being in the popular temper of the times. Flung as he is in the mid-current of passing events, he must swim with the stream or be left upon its banks, for few have the strength or courage to breast the rising wave of public feeling or passion. How different is your case! Set apart for the contemplation and promotion of eternal and unchanging feelings of benevolence, peace, and charity, public opinion would not only tolerate but applaud your abstinence from all displays where martial enthusiasm and hostile passions are called into activity. But a far higher sanction than public opinion is to be found for such a course. When the Master whom you especially serve, and whose example and precepts are the sole credentials of your faith, mingled in the affairs of this life, it was not to join in the exaltation of military genius, or share in the warlike triumphs of nation over nation, but to preach "Peace on EARTH and good will toward MEN." Can the humblest layman err, if, in addressing the loftiest dignitary of the Christian Church, he says "GO THOU AND DO LIKEWISE?"

I remain, yours,  
R. COBDEN.

*To the Rev ———*

# A LETTER TO HENRY ASHWORTH, ESQ.

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LONDON, 10th April, 1862.

MY DEAR SIR,—I avail myself of your kind permission to address you a letter on the present unsatisfactory state of International Maritime Law, as affecting the rights of belligerents and neutrals.

It is not necessary that I should dwell on the particular branch of the subject to which the debate on Mr. Horsfall's motion was, as I venture to think, too exclusively confined, namely, whether private property at sea should be exempted from capture by armed government ships in time of war.

A statement of the simple facts of the case, as they affect British interests, ought to be a sufficient answer to this question, without the necessity of one syllable of discussion. Here is a country, the average value of whose ships and cargoes, afloat, exceeds £100,000,000, which is more than double the amount possessed by any other state. A proposal is made by the United States, with the concurrence of France, Russia, and other countries, to exempt this property from legalised plunder in the event of war. Our merchants and shipowners are, naturally, eager to accept so advantageous an offer, which is, however, rejected by the British Government.

One of the arguments urged by a member of the Cabinet to justify this rejection need not alarm us. It is alleged that such a stipulation would not be respected in time of war. At the worst, this would only leave us where we now are. If, however, an engagement were entered into, by a formal convention of the maritime powers, for insuring the inviolability of private property at sea, it would become a recognised part of inter-

national law; and I do not believe that a judge, sitting in any prize court in the civilised world, would afterwards condemn, as legal capture, ships or cargoes seized in violation of that law. Sure I am, at least, that it is the duty of those filling high office in this country to brand with dishonour the violators of such a solemn engagement, and not to seem, in anticipation, to justify, or even palliate, their infamy.

I have had some difficulty in believing in the sincerity of those who, in order to reconcile us to this unequal game of pillage, put forth the argument that it is desirable to subject our ship-owners to the penalty of ruin, in the event of war, as the best means of binding the nation over to keep the peace. If a majority of the Cabinet, and of both Houses of Parliament, were composed of shipowners, there might be some consistency in this proposition. But if power and responsibility are to be united in the same hands, there is another body of proprietors whose fortunes might with greater justice be made liable to confiscation in case of war. The argument is, however, unworthy of serious refutation.

Had not some of the opponents of Mr. Horsfall's motion professed to doubt whether the Paris declaration in favour of neutrals was irrevocable, they would obviously have been unable to oppose it. But the Paris Congress of 1856 merely recognised a state of things which, as Mr. Baring remarked, had arisen out of the progress of events; it no more created those events than the adoption of the Gregorian Calendar in 1752 produced the astronomical laws which rendered that reform in our style necessary; and any attempt of our statesmen, now, to revert to the treatment of neutrals sanctioned by our prize courts in 1810, would place them on a level with those politicians whom Hogarth depicts, in his famous election scene, clamouring to their candidates, "Give us back our eleven days!"

My principal object, however, in writing is to show that the issue raised by Mr. Horsfall's motion, when taken alone, is



now of little practical value. The question has assumed larger proportions, owing to the progress of events, and in consequence of the latter proceedings of the United States Government. The facts of the case, which are not sufficiently known to the public, are as follow :—

In 1856, as you are aware, Mr. Marcy, foreign secretary to President Pierce, when replying to the communication from the Paris Congress, inviting the American Government to adhere to the declaration abolishing privateering, made the memorable counter-proposal to Europe to exempt the private property of belligerents at sea from capture, both by privateers and armed government ships. This offer, as I have stated, was favourably received by France, Russia, and other maritime powers, but met with no encouragement from the British Government.

The election for the Presidency took place in the autumn of 1856, when Mr. Buchanan was chosen the successor to Mr. Pierce. The question of international maritime law now underwent further discussion in America, and it was contended that, in addition to the exemption of private property from capture, when at sea, it should be free from molestation whilst entering or leaving a commercial port; that, in fine, blockades should be restricted to naval arsenals, and towns which were at the same time invested by an army on land. One of the New York journals,\* the organ of the mercantile body, offered the following as a substitute for the fourth article of the declaration of the Paris Congress :—

“Blockades are henceforth abolished, in regard to all vessels and cargoes engaged in lawful commerce; but they may be enforced as heretofore against vessels having contraband goods on board, and against all Government vessels, whether armed or unarmed.” At a subsequent stage of these discussions, President Buchanan addressed a letter to the Chairman of the New York Chamber of Commerce, in which he said; “We must obtain the consent of the powerful naval

\* *The Journal of Commerce,*

stations that merchant vessels shall not be blockaded in port, but be suffered to pass the blockading squadron, and go out to sea." The consequence of this state of opinion was that Mr. Dallas, the United States Minister at London, was in 1857 instructed by his Government to suspend the negotiations which he was still attempting to promote, upon the basis of Mr. Marcy's proposition.

Thus the matter remained till the spring of 1859, when, on the breaking out of the war in Italy, a circular dispatch was transmitted from Mr. Cass, President Buchanan's foreign secretary, to the representatives of the United States at the European capitals, suggesting still further reforms in international maritime law. An unsuccessful effort was made by Mr. Lindsay to induce our Government to lay on the table of the House a copy of this document; but the substance of its most important proposal was explained by Lord John Russell, when communicating to the House (February 18, 1861) the particulars of the interview at which Mr. Dallas had read to him as foreign minister, this despatch:—Mr. Cass was represented by his Lordship to have declared that he "considered that the right of blockade, as authorised by the law of nations, was liable to very great abuse; that the only case in which a blockade ought to be permitted was when a land army was besieging a fortified place, and a fleet was employed to blockade it on the other side; but that any attempt to intercept trade by blockade, or to blockade places which were commercial ports, was an abuse of the right that ought not to be permitted." Lord Russell took this opportunity of explaining to the House his reasons for opposing these views of the American Government, and which were in substance the same as those with which Mr. Marcy's proposal had been met—namely, that the system of commercial blockades is essential to the maintenance of our naval supremacy.

These incidents have a most important significance, if viewed in connection with present events. We live in an age

of revolutionary transitions, which warn us against too obstinate an adherence to ancient precedent or blind routine. If the proposal of the United States to abolish commercial blockades had been favourably received by the British Government, there can be no doubt, from the known tendency of other maritime powers, that it might have become a part of the law of nations, in which case the commerce between England and the Southern States of the American Union would have been uninterrupted by the present war—for the blockade is acknowledged by Europe only as a belligerent right, and not as an exercise of municipal authority. In justice to the American Government and to prevent any misapprehension of the following statement, I am bound to express the opinion that the closing of the cotton ports is virtually our own act. We have imposed upon ourselves, as neutrals, the privations and sufferings incidental to a commercial blockade, because we assume that we are interested in reserving to ourselves the belligerent right which we now concede to others.

Let us consider, for a moment, whether this policy will bear the test of reason, fact, and experience.

One-third of the inhabitants of these islands, a number equal to the whole population of Great Britain at the commencement of this century, subsist on imported food. No other country contains half as many people as the United Kingdom dependent for subsistence on the produce of foreign lands. The grain of all kinds imported into England in 1861 exceeded in value the whole amount of our imports sixty years ago: and the greater portion of this supply is brought from the two great maritime states, Russia and America, to whom, if to any countries, the belligerent right of blockade must have for us a valuable application. If left to the free operation of nature's laws, this world-wide dependence offers not only the best safeguard against scarcity, but the surest guarantee for regularity of supply; but a people so circumstanced is, beyond all others, interested in removing every human regulation which

interferes with the free circulation of the necessaries of life, whether in time of peace or war—for a state of war increases the necessity for insuring the means of feeding and employing the people.

This is, however, a very inadequate view of the subject. For the raw materials of our industry, which are in other words the daily bread of a large portion of our population, we are still more dependent on foreign countries. Of the 3,127,000 bales of cotton exported in the year 1860-61 from the United States, Great Britain received 2,175,000, or 69 per cent. Of the total exports from Russia, of flax, hemp, and codilla, amounting, in 1859, to 282,880,000 lbs., we received 205,344,000 lbs., or 80 per cent. Of the 101,412,000 lbs. of tallow exported from that country, 91,728,000 lbs., or 90 per cent., reached our shores. And of her total exports of 1,026,000 quarters of linseed, we received 679,000, or 67 per cent. If we refer to other maritime States, we find similar results. Of the 134,500,000 lbs. of tea exported last year from China, 90,500,000, or 70 per cent., came to British ports. And of the 2,752,000 lbs. of silk exported from that country we received upwards of 90 per cent. Of the total exports from Brazil, in 1860, of 185,000 bales of cotton, Great Britain received 102,000, or 55 per cent. Of the total exports from Egypt, in 1860-1, of 142,000 bales of cotton, we received 97,000, or 70 per cent.

It may be alleged of nearly all articles of food or raw materials, transported over sea, that more than one-half is destined for these islands. It follows that were we, in the exercise of the belligerent right of blockade, to prevent the exportation of those commodities, we should inflict greater injury on ourselves than on all the rest of the world, not excepting the country with which we were at war: for if we could effectually close the ports of one or more of these countries against both exports and imports, we should be merely intercepting the supply of comparative luxuries to them, while we arrested the flow of the necessaries of life to ourselves; and for

every cultivator of the soil, engaged in the production of cotton or other raw materials, thereby doomed to idleness, three or four persons would be deprived of employment in the distribution and manufacture of those commodities.

These facts are an answer to those who maintain that it is necessary to reserve in our hands the right of blockade, as an instrument of coercion in case of war. Against such countries as France, Germany, Holland, Belgium, &c., blockades have lost their force, owing to the extension of the railway system throughout the continent of Europe. In cases where a blow may still be struck at the commerce of a nation—of what use, I would ask, is a weapon of offence which recoils with double force on ourselves? It would be but a poor consolation to our population, who were subjected to the evils of enforced idleness and starvation, to be told that the food and raw materials destined for their subsistence and employment were rotting in the granaries of ruined cultivators in Russia or America.

These considerations have always led us, practically, to violate our own theory of a commercial blockade, whenever the power to do so has remained in our hands, even when the exigencies of our situation as a manufacturing people were far less pressing than they are at present. If we consult the experience of our past wars, we shall find that, as a belligerent, we have invariably abstained from taking effectual measures for preventing the productions of our enemies from reaching our shores. It is true we have maintained, for our navy, the traditional right and duty of a blockade, whilst (I beg your attention to the distinction) we have invariably connived at its evasion. I will cite a few examples. We all know how systematically our blockade of France, and other parts of the coast of the Continent, was relaxed by licences during the great war with the first Napoleon; and it is notorious that, at the commencement of the present century, during the height of that war, the deficiency of our own harvests was repeatedly supplied from the cornfields of our most deadly enemy. Nor

must we forget that the celebrated Orders in Council, the most gigantic of all blockades, were ultimately revoked in the interest of our own manufacturers and merchants. Again, in the war with the United States, in 1813, during the blockade of that coast, a powerful and interested party in Parliament called for measures to prevent the importation of American cotton into England, but they were opposed by petitions from Manchester, Stockport, Glasgow, and other places connected with the cotton manufacture, and the result was that the Government refused to take any steps to intercept the cotton of the United States at our Custom-house; and this occurred at a time when our dependence on the produce of that region was, perhaps, not equal to a twentieth part of that of the present day.

The Crimean War, however, affords us a more recent example. That war was declared in March, 1854; but the ports of Russia were not proclaimed in a state of blockade until March, 1855. The Allies temporised for a year with their right and power to close the commercial ports of the Black Sea, whilst carrying on a most sanguinary struggle before the naval arsenal of Sebastopol, in order to allow the exportation of food from Russia, to make good the deficient harvests of France and England. Upwards of half a million of quarters of grain reached our shores from that region in 1854. Here at least is a precedent for the policy of restricting blockades to fortified places, and leaving commercial ports unmolested. If we turn to the operations in the Baltic, during the same war, we find that our blockade of Cronstadt had merely the effect of diverting the produce of Russia, destined for England, into more costly overland channels. An attempt was made similar to that of interested parties in 1813, referred to above, to induce our Government to prevent the importation of Russian produce into this country through Prussia, which drew from the Dundee Chamber of Commerce a memorial, declaring that the raw material from Russia was indispensable to the very existence of the industry of that district. After due deliberation, our

Government refused to require a certificate of origin at the Custom-house, or to offer any other impediment to the importation of Russian hemp, flax, tallow, &c., into this country, through the territory of neutrals. The consequence was that Prussia, which sent us tallow to the amount of £150 only in 1853, was enabled in 1855 to supply us with that article to the amount of £1,838,300; and other Russian commodities reached this country in a similar manner.

It is only necessary to point to the examples of China, Mexico, &c., to show that in our hostilities with the weaker maritime powers we carefully eschew the policy of resorting, as a means of coercion, to the blockade of their commercial ports.

A fair deduction from these facts and premises leads us to a very grave national dilemma. We persist in upholding a belligerent right, which we have always shrunk from enforcing, and shall never rigorously apply, by which we place in the hands of other belligerents the power, at any moment, of depriving a large part of our population of the supply of the raw materials of their industry, and of the necessities of life. In this respect the question of blockade is essentially different from that of the capture of private property at sea. In the latter case we are only liable to injury when we choose to become belligerents, whereas, in the former, we are exposed to serious calamities as neutrals; and England, by proclaiming the policy of non-intervention, has recently constituted herself the great neutral power. In this capacity we are now enduring the effects of a blockade, by which it is estimated that the earnings of labour in this country are curtailed to the extent of a quarter of a million sterling a week. Should it continue, it will, I fear, bring many of the evils of war home to our doors, and plunge the ingenious and industrious population connected with our cotton manufacture, whose recent improvement and elevation we have witnessed with pride, into the depths of pauperism and misery. Nor have we any assurance



that this will prove a solitary case. I can imagine a combination of events, not more improbable than the blockade of the cotton region of the United States by sea and land would have appeared to be three years ago, by which we may be cut off from all commercial intercourse with other countries on which we are largely dependent for raw materials and food.

Speaking abstractedly, and not in reference to the present blockade—for we are precluded from pleading our sufferings as a ground of grievance against a people whose proposals for the mitigation of the barbarous maritime code we have rejected—I do not hesitate to denounce, as opposed to the principles of natural justice, a system of warfare which inflicts greater injuries on an unoffending neutral community than on a belligerent. And, however sincere the Governments of the great maritime powers may be, during a period of general peace, in their professions of adhesion to this system, should any of them as neutrals be subjected to severe sufferings from the maintenance of a blockade, the irritation and sense of injustice which it will occasion to great masses of population, coupled with the consciousness that it is an evil remediable by an appeal to force, will always present a most dangerous incentive to war. Certain I am that such a system is incompatible with the new commercial policy to which we have unreservedly committed ourselves. Free trade, in the widest definition of the term, means only the division of labour, by which the productive powers of the whole earth are brought into mutual co-operation. If this scheme of universal dependence is to be liable to sudden dislocation whenever two governments choose to go to war, it converts a manufacturing industry, such as ours, into a lottery, in which the lives and fortunes of multitudes of men are at stake. I do not comprehend how any British statesman who consults the interests of his country, and understands the revolution which free trade is effecting in the relations of the world, can advocate the maintenance of commercial blockades. If I shared their view, I should shrink from promoting the indefi-



nite growth of a population whose means of subsistence would be liable to be cut off at any moment by a belligerent power, against whom we should have no right of resistance, or even of complaint.

It must be in mere irony that the advocates of such a policy as this ask—of what use would our navy be in case of war, if commercial blockades were abolished? Surely, for a nation that has no access to the rest of the world but by sea, and a large part of whose population is dependent for food on foreign countries, the chief use of a navy should be to keep open its communications, not to close them!

There is another branch of this subject to which a recent occurrence has imparted peculiar importance. We require a clear definition of the circumstances which confer on a belligerent the right of visitation or search. The old and universally admitted rule that any maritime power, when at war, was entitled everywhere to stop and visit the merchant vessels of neutrals, is allowed to be unsuited to this age of extended commerce, of steamers, and postal packets. The principal object which belligerents had in view in the exercise of this power was the capture of enemy's property. But, since the Paris Declaration exempts the goods of an enemy from seizure in neutral bottoms, there is little motive left for preserving this belligerent right; and the question would receive a very simple solution by assimilating the practice in time of war to that which now prevails in time of peace.

Merchant vessels on the high seas are, during peace, considered and treated as a part of the territory to which they belong. There is no point on which the maritime powers are more clearly understood than that, excepting cases of special convention to the contrary, such as that for suppressing the African slave-trade, the flags of merchantmen afford an absolute protection against visitation or obstruction by an alien ship of war. This rule applies, of course, only to the high seas; for when foreign merchant vessels approach so near the coast of a

maritime State as to place themselves within its municipal jurisdiction, they are subject to all its police and revenue regulations. Now, why should not this be the invariable law of the sea, in time of war as well as of peace? Because two maritime powers in some quarter of the globe choose to enter upon hostilities is no good reason why neutral merchant ships, sailing in every sea, should be subjected to their authority.

This change would simplify the question of contraband of war, and thus tend to obviate the risk of international disputes. An article is rendered contraband of war only by its hostile destination. Were the right of search on the high seas in time of war abolished, the only admissible proof of this destination would be the fact of the vessel being found within the waters of a belligerent State. If those waters were in the possession of a hostile power, the jurisdiction would appertain to the blockading fleet of that power; and a neutral merchant vessel, containing articles contraband of war, entering voluntarily within that jurisdiction, would be *ipso facto* liable to capture. As to the question what should, under such circumstances, constitute an unlawful cargo, I see no reason why we should seek to multiply impediments to commerce by extending the category of articles contraband of war beyond that proposed by the United States, viz., arms and ammunition.

Without dwelling on minor details, the three great reforms in international maritime law embraced in the preceding argument are—

1. The exemption of private property from capture at sea, during war, by armed vessels of every kind.
2. Blockades to be restricted to naval arsenals, and to towns besieged at the same time on land, with the exception of articles contraband of war.
3. The merchant ships of neutrals on the high seas to be inviolable to the visitation of alien government vessels in time of war as in time of peace.

It is at the option of the English Government at any time

to enter upon negotiations with the other great Powers for the revision of the maritime code, and I speak advisedly in expressing my belief that it depends on us alone whether the above reforms are to be carried into effect. I will only add that I regard these changes as the necessary corollary of the repeal of the navigation laws, the abolition of the corn laws, and the abandonment of our colonial monopoly. We have thrown away the sceptre of force, to confide in the principle of freedom—uncovenanted, unconditional freedom. Under this new *régime* our national fortunes have prospered beyond all precedent. During the last fourteen years the increase in our commerce has exceeded its entire growth during the previous thousand years of reliance on force, cunning, and monopoly. This should encourage us to go forward, in the full faith that every fresh impediment removed from the path of commerce, whether by sea or land, and whether in peace or war, will augment our prosperity, at the same time that it will promote the general interests of humanity.

Believe me, my dear Sir,

Yours very sincerely,

RICHARD COBDEN.

Henry Ashworth, Esq., President of the  
Manchester Chamber of Commerce.

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POSTSCRIPT.—On the first appearance of this letter in the columns of the newspaper press, the not unusual mode of raising irrelevant issues, with the view of evading the real question, was resorted to. It has been alleged that I had no authority for saying that the English Government had refused to accede to Mr. Marcy's proposal for exempting private property from capture at sea.

The very fact that Mr. Horsfall's motion, which was regarded as a repetition of Mr. Marcy's proposal, was opposed in the House of Commons by Lord Palmerston, who had been Prime Minister in 1856, when that proposal was first made,

might be considered sufficient proof that it was not favourably received by the British Government. But other evidence is not wanting. Lord John Russell, speaking in the House of Commons, February 18th, 1861, said, "I found that when the matter was under discussion with the American Government at the time of the Conference at Paris, the opinion of the Earl of Clarendon (then Foreign Minister) seems to have been unfavourable to the proposal that private property at sea should be respected during war."

It has been, moreover, asserted that the American Government were not sincere in making their proposal. Such an accusation coarsely (because anonymously) made, and without an atom of evidence to support it, might properly be passed over without notice. I refer to it only because it gives me the opportunity of saying that I have had the opportunity of conversing with leading statesmen in the United States, not merely of the political school to which Mr. Marcy belonged, but also of the Republican party, and they all agree that had the proposition for making private property inviolable at sea been accepted by the European Powers in 1856, it would have been willingly carried into effect by their Government. The Senate was known to be favourable, and no other body shares the treaty-making power with the President. It was, indeed, impossible that President Pierce and Mr. Marcy could have made such a proposal to Europe without having previously ascertained that it had the sanction of two-thirds of the members of the Senate, whose concurrence is, by the constitution, requisite to carry any treaty into effect.

R. C.

*May 15th, 1862.*

HOW WARS ARE GOT UP IN INDIA.

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THE ORIGIN  
OF  
THE BURMESE WAR.

## NOTE.

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THE following pamphlet was written in the summer of 1853, nearly three years before the late Lord Dalhousie, then Governor-General of India, had terminated that career of violence and spoliation which dazzled the nation by the meretricious lustre of its successes, but which, to the prescient eye of Mr. Cobden, who saw with painful clearness its injustice and immorality, was fraught with the gravest peril to the Empire. His attention was first drawn to the origin of the last Burmese War by a pamphlet from the able pen of the Rev. Henry Richard, a gentleman who, as is well known, was intimately associated with him in some of the most important of his public labours. The apathy which was then felt in the details of our Indian policy, and therefore the great public service which Mr. Cobden rendered by assisting to uplift the veil, may, to some extent, be illustrated by an incident, which, although trivial in itself, is eminently suggestive. Conversing with a magnate of the East India Company in the lobby of the House of Commons, he remarked on the profound ignorance and unconcern of the public in relation to all Indian questions. "I have not met," said he, "with any one who has paid the smallest attention to the origin of this Burmese War, except my friend here"—pointing to Mr. Richard—"who indeed dug the matter to light from the blue book." Mr. Cobden lost no time in disentombing the facts from the same official burial-ground, and with a result which will entitle his searching exposure of deeds that will not bear the light to the thoughtful consideration of all Englishmen who desire to make themselves acquainted with the true history of Indian misgovernment. The last eloquent paragraph of the pamphlet, in which the certainty of retribution for national transgressions of the moral law is solemnly enforced, may now be read in the light of the ghastly events which have since made Cawnpore and Delhi but too famous throughout the world.

## P R E F A C E .

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HAVING had occasion to read with attention the "Papers relating to Hostilities with Burmah," with the view of bringing the subject under the consideration of the House (which circumstances prevented my doing) I have made an abstract of the leading facts of the case for publication, in the hope that it may induce the reader to peruse the original correspondence. This I was the more immediately tempted to do from not having been able to meet with anybody, in or out of Parliament, who had read the "Papers." In fact, owing to the complex form in which they are printed—not giving letter and answer in consecutive order, but grouping them arbitrarily in batches—they require a considerable effort of the attention to read them with advantage. I may say, by way of explanation, that the whole of the narrative is founded exclusively upon the Parliamentary papers, and that all the extracts in the text, for which references are given at the foot of each page, are copied from the same official source. Wherever I have inserted quotations not taken from the Parliamentary papers they are printed as notes. It should be borne in mind that the case, such as it is, is founded upon our own *ex parte* statement. A great many of the letters are mutilated: and, remembering that, in the Afghan papers, it is now known that the character of at least one of the Cabool chiefs was sacrificed by a most dishonest garbling of his language, I confess I am not without suspicions that a similar course may have been pursued in the present instance. I will only add, then, bad as our case now appears, what would it be if we could have access to the Burmese "Blue Books," stating their version of the business?

The correspondence to which I have referred is—

- 1st. Papers relating to hostilities with Burmah, presented to both Houses of Parliament, June 4th, 1852.
- 2nd. Further papers relating to hostilities with Burmah, presented to both Houses of Parliament, March 15th, 1853.

# HOW WARS ARE GOT UP IN INDIA.

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IN June, 1851, the British barque *Monarch*, of 250 tons, last from Moulmein, reached Rangoon, the principal port of the Burmese Empire. On the second day after their arrival, Captain Sheppard, the master and owner, "was taken before the police to answer the charge of having, during the voyage, thrown overboard the pilot Esoph, preferred by a man named Hajim, a native of Chittagong, who stated that he was brother of the said pilot."\* The accuser and deceased were British subjects, both being natives of Chittagong, one of the provinces of our Indian Empire, lying contiguous to the territory of Burmah. The answer to the accusation was, that the pilot, having run the vessel aground, had jumped overboard. Captain Sheppard was mulcted in fines and fees to the amount of £46, and permission was then given him to depart; but when about to sail he was again detained, "owing to a charge brought by a man named Dewan Ali (a British subject, employed in one of the Moulmein gunboats), calling himself a brother of the pilot, bringing forward a claim for a sum of 500 rupees, which he stated his brother had taken with him."† This led to a fresh exaction of £55!—and, after a forcible detention altogether of eight days, the ship was allowed to sail.

The British vessel, the *Champion*, of 410 tons, Captain Lewis, arrived at Rangoon, from the Mauritius, in August, 1851. Two Bengal coolies, who had secreted themselves on board his ship, with a view to return to their country,

\* Papers relating to hostilities with Burmah presented to Parliament, June 4, 1852, p. 5

† Ibid,



made charges against the captain of murder and other offences, and they were joined by some lascars and others of the crew, who deserted, and made an appeal to the authorities for the recovery of their wages. After being detained fifteen days, and compelled to forfeit £70 for fines, fees, and seamen's wages, Captain Lewis was suffered to depart.

These two captains appealed to the Government of India for redress. They claimed together £1,920 for re-imbusement of arbitrary fines, demurrage of ships, and compensation for ill-usage, and unlawful imprisonment. This claim was revised by the Indian authorities, and cut down to £920, or less than one-half; and it was in enforcing payment of this sum that the present war arose.

*It must be borne in mind that all the parties to these suits were British subjects; the Governor of Rangoon had not been adjudicating in matters in which Burmese interests, as opposed to those of foreigners, were at stake.*

When these complaints were laid before the Governor-General of India, it happened that two of the Queen's ships, the *Fox* and the *Serpent*, under the command of Commodore Lambert, were lying in the Hooghly. He was requested to proceed to Rangoon, and "in maintenance of the Treaty of Yandaboo, and the Commercial Treaty of 1826, to demand full reparation for the injuries and oppressions to which the above-named British subjects have been exposed." No other demand for reparation beyond the payment of this sum of about £920 appears at the outset of these proceedings. Vague allusions are made to other acts of injustice committed upon British subjects, but no specific complaint is formally made, and no individual grievances are officially adduced, excepting those of Captains Sheppard and Lewis. We are informed, indeed, in a Minute, by the Governor-General of India, that "for many years past complaints, from time to time, had been made of acts of oppression and of violation of treaty by the Burmese Governors. *None, however, had been brought forward of*

*sufficient extent or significancy, to call for the formal notice of this Government.*" \* It is important at the outset to have the highest authority for the fact, that up to this time the Burmese authorities at Ava were quite ignorant that the British Government had any complaint to prefer against the Governors of Rangoon.

Before his departure from Calcutta, Commodore Lambert received very precise instructions from the Governor-General, how to act under almost every possible contingency; and as these directions were disregarded the moment he reached Rangoon, without drawing on himself a word of censure or remonstrance, thus involving grave questions as to the due assertion of authority on one side, and the observance of professional subordination on the other, I beg the reader's careful attention to this part of the narrative. It will, moreover, serve to illustrate the unsatisfactory working of the "double government" of India.

After recapitulating all the facts of the cases of Captains Sheppard and Lewis, and requesting Commodore Lambert to proceed to demand reparation from the Governor of Rangoon, Lord Dalhousie suggests, that "although there seems no reason to doubt the accuracy of the depositions, or the veracity of the deponents,† it would be right that the Commodore should in the first instance be satisfied on this head."‡ He is then requested to demand from the Governor of Rangoon the just pecuniary compensation in favour of the injured parties. *Should that functionary refuse redress* (mark the proviso), the Commodore is then to forward to the King of Burmah, at Ava, the capital, a letter with which he is furnished, from the Government of India, calling his Majesty's attention to the subject, "in the full conviction that he will at once condemn the conduct of his officers by whom this offence has been perpetrated, and will make to the parties who have been injured that compensation which is most justly due to

\* P. 64. † Why, then, reduce the claim to less than one-half? ‡ P. 13.

them for the injuries they have sustained.”\* So minute are the instructions given to the Commodore by Lord Dalhousie, that the mode of forwarding the letter to Ava, and the proper way of disposing of his squadron during the necessary delay in receiving an answer, are carefully pointed out in these terms :—

“In the event of the Governor of Rangoon refusing, or evading compliance with the demands conveyed to him by the Commodore, the letter addressed by the President in Council to the King should be delivered by the Commodore to the Governor of Rangoon for transmission to Ava, accompanied by an intimation that an early reply from the court of Ava will be expected ; and that, if it should not in due time be received, the Government of India will proceed to take such measures as they may think necessary and right.

The delay thus interposed is unavoidable in the present anomalous relations of the two Governments. *It will, moreover, admit of the Commodore proceeding to the Persian Gulf, whither his lordship understands he is under orders to proceed.*”†

The Governor-General’s instructions conclude with the following emphatic injunction to avoid any violent proceedings. It might have been penned expressly to guard against the course which the Commodore afterwards pursued :—“IT IS TO BE DISTINCTLY UNDERSTOOD THAT NO ACT OF HOSTILITY IS TO BE COMMITTED AT PRESENT, THOUGH THE REPLY OF THE GOVERNOR SHOULD BE UNFAVOURABLE, NOR UNTIL DEFINITE INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING SUCH HOSTILITIES SHALL BE GIVEN BY THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.”‡

Let us now recapitulate in the briefest possible terms the instructions given to Commodore Lambert :—

1st. He was requested to inquire on the spot whether the compensation claimed by Captains Sheppard and Lewis, which had already been reduced to less than one-half of their original demand by the Indian Government, was founded on justice. In a word he was instructed to hear both sides.

\* Ibid.

† P. 14.

‡ Ibid.

2nd. To demand payment of the amount of compensation from the Governor of Rangoon before applying to the Court of Ava, and to use the letter addressed to the King only, "in the event of the Governor refusing or evading compliance."\*

3rd. In case it was found necessary to forward the letter to the King then the Commodore was to proceed to the Persian Gulf.

4th. In no case, until further definite instructions should be received from the Government of India, was any act of hostility to be committed.

We shall see under what circumstances Commodore Lambert set aside all these instructions and pursued the very opposite course to that prescribed by the Governor-General.

Towards the end of November, 1851, the Commodore sailed with his squadron from Calcutta for the Rangoon River. The distance by sea between the ports of Calcutta and Rangoon is about 500 miles. On his arrival at the latter place several of the residents † who claimed to be British subjects preferred further complaints against the Governor of Rangoon. He requested them to state their grievances in writing, which they did on the 28th November; ‡ but on the 27th, *before a written declaration was in his hands* (it is important to notice this as the beginning of a series of impulsive and precipitate acts)

\* P. 14.

† The first person who came on board the Commodore's ship (whose name is given in the Blue Book and in the Parliamentary Report, but which for obvious reasons I suppress) is thus described by Lord Ellenborough:—"One of the most considerable traders at Rangoon is a person of the name of——. That man, as soon as he knew of the probability of a war, freighted a schooner with arms and sold them to the Governor of Rangoon. When the Governor refused payment for them he had the effrontery to go to Commodore Lambert and complain of the injury inflicted upon him. I suppose we shall hereafter see the amount of compensation claimed by that person in the bill to be paid by the Burmese Government. The Governor of Rangoon offered in consequence £100 for that man's head, and I confess I should not have been deeply grieved if he had got it. This is a description of one of the persons whom this great war is to be undertaken."—*House of Lords, April 5th, 1852.*

‡ P. 25.

he wrote to the Governor of Rangoon to the following effect\* :—

“COMMODORE LAMBERT TO THE GOVERNOR OF RANGOON.

*“On board Her Britannic Majesty's ship of war Fox, at anchor off Rangoon,  
November 27th, 1851.*

“The object of my visit to Rangoon was, at the request of the Most Noble the Marquis of Dalhousie, the Governor-General of British India, to demand redress for insults and injuries you have committed on subjects belonging to Her Britannic Majesty Queen Victoria.

“Since my arrival so many more complaints have been made by persons residing at Rangoon who have a right to claim British protection that I have deemed it my duty to withhold my original demand until I have again made known their complaints to his lordship.”

It might naturally be expected that, after despatching this letter to the Governor, the writer would send one of the two steamers which, in addition to his own vessel, the *Fox*, now composed the squadron under his command, to Calcutta for further orders. This was much too dilatory a mode of proceeding. On the very next day the Commodore commenced his diplomatic career, without credentials or authority of any kind, by sitting down and writing a letter to the “Prime Minister” of the King of Ava, enclosing the letter which had been entrusted to him for use *in case the Governor had refused compliance with his demand*, and added that owing to the accounts he had heard of the additional wrongs inflicted upon British subjects by the Governor he passed him by, and appealed for his punishment directly to the Court of Ava.†

These two letters, the one from *The President of the Council of India in Council, to the King of Ava*, and the other from *Commodore Lambert to the Prime Minister of His Majesty the King of Ava*, were then forwarded to the Governor of Rangoon with the following‡ :—

“COMMODORE LAMBERT TO THE GOVERNOR OF RANGOON.

*November 28th, 1851.*

“I have the honour to transmit you a letter for his Majesty the King of Ava, together with one for the Prime Minister of the King.

\* P. 24.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

“I shall expect that every despatch will be used for forwarding the same, and I hold you responsible for an answer being delivered in these waters within five weeks from this day.”

Captains Latter and Tarleton were deputed to deliver this letter to the Governor. The following is the description of the interview as given by Captain Latter, who filled the office of interpreter to the expedition :—

“This letter was translated by me into Burmese. We landed, went to the Governor’s house escorted by some of the English residents and traders. I read aloud to the Governor, first in English and then in Burmese, the letter, and Captain Tarleton delivered it. The Governor made his appearance in a somewhat informal dress, being dressed in nothing but common white clothes, and smoking a cheroot, whilst all the under Governors were in their court dresses. This was the more to be remarked because the Governor has several gold crowns which he wears on state occasions. The European officers were of course in full uniform. The Governor wished us to stop and sit down, but Captain Tarleton thought it more prudent to say that we had only been charged to read and deliver the letter to him, and that we had received no instructions about holding any other communication. We then bowed, withdrew, and returned to the frigate. We received no opposition either going or coming.”\*

From Rangoon to Ava is about 450 miles, and Government expresses perform the journey in from ten to twelve days, so that to receive an answer in five weeks was quite practicable, provided the Cabinet of his Burmese Majesty did not require so long a time for deliberation as is sometimes found necessary in Europe.

As soon as he had despatched his letter to the Governor, the Commodore sat down and wrote a laconic account of his proceedings to the Government of India, which he sent off to Calcutta by a steamer in charge of Captain Latter, the interpreter, who was deputed to explain the circumstances which had induced him to depart from his instructions.

Let us now see what those circumstances were :—

We have already stated that, on the arrival of the squadron

\* P. 30.

in Rangoon river, an additional list of grievances was presented to the Commodore, on behalf of the British residents.\* The statement professes to emanate from the “undersigned merchants and others, resident in Rangoon,” but there are no signatures appended to the document, which contains a list of thirty-eight grievances, separately numbered, and mostly without dates. I am sorry that it is not compatible with that brevity which is above all things my object, to copy every one of these cases from the Blue Book, but I will give the first four on the list, as a fair specimen of the whole :—

#### LIST OF GRIEVANCES.

“1. A short time ago a charge was brought against Aga Sadduck, merchant, in this town, by his wife who had been separated from him fifteen years. No less a sum than 5,500 rupees was extorted from him by the present Governor.

“2. In the case of Goolam Hussain, a merchant of Rangoon, against whom a charge was brought of alleged faithlessness to his wife, the sum of 1,500 rupees was extorted from him.

“3. In the case of Goolam Hussain (deceased), who was the owner of some mineral said to have had the virtue of completing the art of alchemy,

\* The Earl of Ellenborough made the following observations upon these proceedings (*House of Lords, February 16th, 1852*):—

“He also wished to know whether, before any requisition was sent to the King of Ava, for reparation for the injuries inflicted on British subjects in Rangoon any trustworthy officer of ours was sent there to ascertain the truth of their representations, and the extent of the injuries inflicted? He could recollect—it was not so distant an era—he could recollect the circumstances of a complaint which was brought under the notice of the British Government, by a certain Don Pacifico. Athens rejoiced in one Pacifico; but he could assure their lordships that there were dozens of Pacificos at Rangoon. If there were not the grossest ignorance of, or the strangest misrepresentations about Rangoon, on the part of those who have written about it, Rangoon was the sink of Asia—the Alsatia to which all men went who could not keep a footing elsewhere. Persons of European origin, who had discovered that Asia was too hot to hold them, lived in Ava, and generally went to Rangoon, and there, under the same, or perhaps some other name, endeavoured to gain a new reputation or a new fortune. He should not wish the Government to take any political measures with regard to Ava, without sending an officer there to inquire into the circumstances. He regretted that this had not been done in the first instance; for it was reported that when the Commodore went to Rangoon with his fleet, he



the Governor wanted to get the mineral, which was refused him. In consequence of this, a charge of theft was trumped up against him. The unfortunate man was seized, and flogged in the most cruel manner, from the effects of which he died soon after.

“4. Against Nicholas Johannes, an Armenian merchant, a story was got up, that, in a piece of ground which he had lately purchased, there was buried a jar of silver. The Government people were ordered to dig for the jar in question, when Mr. Johannes detected them in the act of slipping money into the jar. The Governor decreed that he should pay 1,000 rupees for these proceedings of his own men.”

The absurd list of grievances, of which the above are a sample, and which bring to recollection a popular volume of reports of our own police courts, called “*Mornings at Bow Street*,” was, as I have before stated, placed in the hands of Captain Latter, who proceeded to Calcutta to offer an explanation of the occurrences which had taken place at Rangoon. Arrived at his destination, he was requested to make his statement in writing, and I find in the Report presented by him to Mr. Halliday (the Secretary to the Government) that he gives as the reason why Commodore Lambert departed from the instructions laid down by the Governor-General for his guidance, that “the Commodore appeared to think that when the Governor-General of India came to know of these fresh instances of the Governor of Rangoon’s misconduct, he, the Governor-General, might not consider the taking satisfaction for merely Messrs. Sheppard and Lewis’s cases sufficient, but might wish to take further steps.”\* Let us see what the Governor-General has to say in reply.

found circumstances very different from those which had been represented to him. The Don Pacificos pushed off their boats, and went on board with representations of the damage which they said they had sustained.”

[Commodore Lambert *had* directions to inquire into the justice of the demand which he was sent to make upon the Governor of Rangoon ; but, instead of doing so, he took for granted the truth of fresh complaints brought against that officer, and acted upon them, without allowing the accused party the opportunity of answering one or the other of the charges.]

\* P. 28.



The letter from the Government Secretary, Mr. Halliday, in answer to Commodore Lambert's communication, has been mutilated at the Board of Control, and an *Extract*, only, appears in the Blue Book. It may be therefore charitably hoped that the scissors in Cannon Row, and not the pen of the able Secretary at Fort William, are responsible for the inconsistency, not to say the absurdity of its contents.

*"The statements contained,"* says the *Extract*, *"in the memorial presented by the British subjects at Rangoon must be received with caution: not having been made the subject of complaint at the time, these additional cases cannot now be made the groundwork of an increased demand for compensation."* It might naturally be supposed that, after this implied reflection upon the incautiousness of the Commodore, there would follow an expression of regret on behalf of the Governor-General at his having upon such insufficient grounds departed from the instructions laid down for his guidance; but the reader will find with astonishment the following paragraph in the same *Extract*—

*"Having regard to the additional long list, which was delivered to you, of unwarrantable and oppressive acts committed upon British subjects by order of the Governor of Rangoon, as well as to the personal bearing of that functionary towards the Commodore of the squadron, and to his obvious intention of resorting to the usual policy of the Burmese Court by interposing endless delays, and disregard of official communications addressed to him; his Lordship is of opinion that you exercised a sound discretion in cutting short all discussion with the local Governor, and in transmitting at once to the King of Ava the letter addressed to his Majesty by the Government of India."*

The logic of this is akin to that which the wolf resorted to, upon a certain occasion in an argument with the lamb. "Be cautious how you listen to those Rangoon merchants" (says Mr. Halliday), "do not make their complaints the groundwork of a demand for compensation from the Governor of Rangoon: but you did right in making those complaints the 'ground-

work' of a resolution to pass by the Governor of Rangoon, and send the Governor-General's letter to the court of Ava, *asserting that he had refused all redress*, and demanding his recall." And again, for another specimen of the same logic :—"So many fresh complaints were made to me by resident merchants on my arrival in the river of Rangoon," says Commodore Lambert, "that I resolved to hold no communication whatever with the Governor upon the business which I came here to settle." "You were quite right in cutting short all discussion with the local Governor," replies Mr. Halliday, in the name of the Governor-General ; "for it is very evident from his personal bearing towards you, and from his obvious intention to resort to the usual policy of the Burmese Court, by interposing endless delays, and disregarding official communications addressed to him, that you would have accomplished nothing by entering into negotiations with him."

Heaven defend me from ever finding myself in the position of the Governor of Rangoon, with no other appeal but to round-shot and shells against the conclusions of such logicians as the Governor-General of India and Commodore Lambert !

The Commodore's brief and peremptory communication to the Governor of Rangoon, requiring him to forward to his Sovereign at Ava a letter demanding his own disgrace, and which I have given in a preceding page, is dated November 28th, 1851. An answer was demanded in five weeks. It arrived on the 1st January, being a day within the limited time. This having been the only instance in which the British Commander had preferred any request to the Governor, the promptitude of his compliance is a sufficient commentary on the passage quoted in the despatch from the Government of India, accusing him of "endless delays and disregard of official communications addressed to him." It is but fair to adduce this fact, in favour of one who now disappears from the scene, without having been heard in his own defence.

The following letter from Commodore Lambert, to the

President of the Council of India, opens the second act in this drama :—

“COMMODORE LAMBERT TO SIR JOHN LITTLER.

“*H. M. S. Fox, off Rangoon, January, 1st., 1852.*

“I have the honour to acquaint you that an officer from the Court of Ava arrived on board of Her Majesty’s ship under my command this morning, and delivered a letter from the King to the Government of India, in reply to the letter which I forwarded on the 28th of November.

“I also had the honour of a reply from his Majesty’s Minister to my communication of that date; a copy is enclosed: from the purport of which it appears the Burmese Government have dismissed the Governor of Rangoon, *and promised to settle the demand made on them by the Government of India.*

“I AM OF OPINION THAT THE KING IS SINCERE, AND THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WILL FULLY ACT UP TO WHAT HE HAS PROMISED.

“The future Governor of Rangoon, vested with full powers to settle the demands, is daily expected from Prome.

“In order that the Governor-General of India may be informed, as early as possible, of the state of affairs, I have despatched the *Tenasserim* steam-vessel to Calcutta with the letter from the King of Ava, which has been translated by Mr. Edwards, in compliance with the directions he states he received.”

It will be seen by the above that the Burmese Government complied instantly with the demand for the dismissal of the Governor of Rangoon, and promised redress for the injuries he had inflicted upon British subjects. But I beg the especial attention of the reader to the paragraph printed in capitals, which expresses the belief of the writer in the sincerity of the King, and to which I shall again have occasion to refer. The whole case, as between the Governments of Burmah and of India, may henceforth be said to turn upon this passage.

The letter from the Burmese Government to the Government of India, and that to Commodore Lambert, are written not only in a courteous but a deferential tone. I will merely give the concluding sentence of the letter to the Commodore, showing, as it does, that the Court of Ava were under the

impression that he would himself be the bearer of the answer to the letter of the Indian Government: "We have to request," say the Burmese Ministers, "that Commodore Lambert will, with friendly feeling, apprise us of the date of his departure from Rangoon, with the reply to the letter of the President of the Council of India." \* I ask the reader to bear this in mind in connection with what is to follow.

"On the 4th of January, the newly appointed Governor, or Special Commissioner from the Court of Ava, arrived at Rangoon, with a numerous suite." † On the 5th, Commodore Lambert "sent Mr. Edwards, the assistant-interpreter, to ascertain when it would be convenient for him to receive an officer with a letter, stating the nature of the claims which the Government of British India had made on that of Burmah, and to say that when all had been adjusted he should do himself the honour of personally paying his respects to him: the reply to which was, that the Governor was ready at any time to receive communications from him; and the following day was fixed." ‡ On this visit Mr. Edwards, who was clerk to Captain Latter, the interpreter to the squadron, and himself familiar with the Burmese language, was admitted to a personal interview with the new Governor, who at once consented, at the instance of Mr. Edwards, to remove the embargo by which the inhabitants had been hitherto prevented from holding communication with the ships or boats of the squadron.§ It is important that this fact should be borne in mind, as an answer to the vague statements, for which no official proofs are afforded, that the new Governor had, on his first arrival, by his proclamation and other acts, shown an unfriendly disposition towards the British residents.

On the following day, the 6th, "the Commodore directed Captain Fishbourne, commanding Her Majesty's steamer *Hermes*, Captain Latter, and two officers of the *Hermes*, with Mr. Edwards, to proceed and deliver to the Governor the

\* P. 36.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

§ P. 44.

letter containing the demands he was charged to make. Captain Latter was at the time on board the *Proserpine*, finishing the Burmese translation of the letter which was to be given to the Governor; and to give him due warning of their approach, on his own responsibility, as there was no time to spare, he sent Mr. Edwards on shore to him, to give notice of their coming, and charged him to say that, as he had already shown his friendly feelings by his amicable expressions of the day before, with reference to the time of receiving a communication from Commodore Lambert, there would be no necessity for making any display in receiving them, so that there could be no necessity for any delay.”\*

Mr. Edwards landed and proceeded to the Governor's house; and now follows an incident which is of the utmost value as illustrative of the temper and disposition of the Governor towards his English visitors. The narrative is in Captain Latter's own words:—“At the foot of the outer steps, one of the Governor's suite drew his dagger on him, and threateningly asked him how he dared thus to approach the Governor's house. Mr. Edwards replied that he had no intention of entering without the Governor's permission. On being called into the Governor's presence, he stated that his life had been threatened, and mentioned what had occurred. The Governor sent for the offender, and punished him in the presence of Mr. Edwards in the usual Burmese manner, namely, by having him taken by the hair of the head, swung round three times, his face dashed to the ground, himself dragged out by the hair and pitched down stairs.”†

*(I ask the reader to observe that, within six hours of the infliction of this severe punishment for an insult committed upon a clerk, Commodore Lambert will have declared Rangoon in a state of blockade for an insult alleged to have been offered by the Governor to the superior officers of the squadron.)*

Mr. Edwards now delivered his message to the Governor,

\* P. 44.

† Ibid.

informing him of the deputation which was preparing to wait upon him:—the Governor said, “he wished to receive the communication through him and nobody else.” Mr. Edwards replied “that that could not be, for two reasons: first, that a communication of such importance could not be made through a person holding his subordinate position, being only a clerk under Captain Latter’s orders; and secondly, that even if it could be so made, it was too late now, as the officers entrusted with it, one of whom was in rank next to the Commodore himself, were now preparing to come.”\* Mr. Edwards took his leave, and returned to the vessel.

Before we accompany the deputation to the Governor’s house, let it be understood that no previous arrangement had been come to for its reception. To all who are acquainted with the customs of the East, and the childlike importance which Oriental nations, and especially the Burmese, attach to the ceremonial of visits, it must be evident that the course about to be pursued was pretty certain to end unsatisfactorily. The Governor had expressed his readiness to receive a *communication, not a deputation*, from Commodore Lambert, and he had entreated the clerk of the interpreter to bring it himself. Mr. Edwards could run in and out of his house freely, as bearer either of a message or letter, because, for a person of his inferior rank, no formal reception was necessary; but how “the Governor of all the lower Provinces, from Prome to the sea, including Rangoon,” was to receive a body of officers of subordinate rank, without either offending them,† or for ever degrading himself in the eyes of his own people, was a question of etiquette not to be decided in a day. An Englishman, in such a dilemma, would order his servant to tell an unbidden caller he was “not at home.” In the East, if the unwelcome

\* P. 45.

† The reader will have seen a symptom of this in the allusion to the absence of a “crown,” to the “common white dress,” and the smoking of a cheroot, on the occasion of the interview of Captains Latter and Tarleton with the former Governor—*ante*, p. 404.

visitor present himself in the middle of the day, the answer is, "My master is asleep."

The deputation "landed at about noon, and proceeded to Mr. Birrell's house to procure horses to take them up, as the distance (about two miles) was too much to walk in the sun." \* They were bearers of a letter from the Commodore, stating that "the object of his visit to Rangoon had been so satisfactorily met by the prompt course the Government of Ava had adopted in the permanent removal of the late Governor of Rangoon,"† that he felt assured of the amicable arrangement of the further matters to be discussed, and he concluded with a demand for the payment of 9,948 rupees (a fraction under a thousand pounds), and suggesting that a Resident Agent at Rangoon should henceforth be appointed by the Governor-General of India, to avoid a recurrence of differences between the two countries. *There was nothing in the contents of the letter which in the slightest degree called upon the writer to force the Governor to receive it by the hands of a deputation.*

It is right that the leader of the deputation should be allowed to relate in his own words what followed :—

"COMMANDER FISHBOURNE TO COMMODORE LAMBERT.

"H.M.'s steam-sloop 'Hermes,' off Rangoon,  
"January 6th, 1852.

"I have the honour to represent to you that, in pursuance of your orders of the 6th instant to me, to wait on the Governor of Rangoon with a letter from you, and also to inquire why it was that Mr. Edwards, while bearing a friendly message, had a sword placed at his breast, and threatened ‡ within the precincts of the Governor's house ? §

"I beg to state that I proceeded accordingly, accompanied by Captain Latter, and Mr. Edwards as interpreter, and Lieutenant Lawrence and Dr. McLeod, surgeon of Her Majesty's steam-sloop *Hermes*.

"When we arrived within a very short distance of the Governor's house, two sub-officials endeavoured to stop us. Captain Latter assuring me that

\* P 45.

† P. 37.

‡ Sic in orig.

§ Remembering the summary punishment already inflicted upon the wretched offender in this case, a recurrence to it as a grievance looks very much like a desire to find a ground of quarrel.



this was intended rather as a slight, I did not deem it proper to stop. Mr. Edwards, however, communicated with them, on which they said that we could not see the Governor, but must go and wait on the Deputy-Governor.

“On arriving at the gate of the Governor’s compound, there appeared to be a reluctance on the part of two or three that we should enter.

“On arriving at the foot of the stairs leading to the Governor’s ante-chamber, there appeared at the top, Mounḡ Pogan, a man who had accompanied each deputation to the *Fox* in the professed character of interpreter, and another, I presume one of the Governor’s retinue, the latter of whom stated that we could not see the Governor, as he was asleep, and asked if we could not wait till he awoke. This he was informed by Captain Latter that we could not do, and that the Governor, if asleep, must be waked up, and informed that the Commander of one of the ships of war, bearing a letter from Commodore Lambert, waited to see him ; on this, he, together with Mounḡ Pogan, went into the Governor’s house, apparently to convey the message.

“They soon after returned, the one stating that the Governor was a great man, and was asleep and could not be awaked, but Mounḡ Pogan called Mr. Edwards on one side and asked him to go up and speak with the Governor ; understanding this by his grimace, without waiting to be confirmed in the correctness of my conclusion, I said he could not go, whereupon Captain Latter asked me for your letter.(which I gave him), that he might point to it while explaining that it was one of a most peaceful kind, and insisted upon the necessity of our being received ; whereupon the attendant and Mounḡ Pogan went again, as it were, to see the Governor, saying that we had better go and stand under the shed, a place where the common people usually assembled.

“Meanwhile, expressing the great inconvenience of staying in the sun, I was going upstairs with a view to sit in the Governor’s waiting-room, but Captain Latter interposed, and said it was not according to etiquette ; I was informed also that my going under the shed alluded to, for protection from the sun, would be considered by them as degrading ; I refrained from going, or rather returned to my original position at the foot of the stairs, for I had gone under the shed.

“The attendant and Mounḡ Pogan returned, the former again repeating that the Governor was asleep, and Mounḡ Pogan again expressed a wish that Mr. Edwards should go up, and, on this being again refused, proposed that your letter should be sent to the Governor by them, which I considered it my duty to refuse ; Captain Latter, at the same time, explaining that if it were proper to send the letter by them, it were unnecessary to have sent the captain of an English man-of-war, and the next in command to the Commodore, with it.



“About this time an officer came up, whom I recognised as one who had been on a deputation from the Governor to the Commodore ; and, being anxious to have matters settled amicably, I requested Captain Latter to explain to him how improper the treatment we had received had been ; that he must be well aware that every deputation from the Governor and Deputy-Governor had been received by the Commodore at all times, and with courtesy ; and, if it had been that the Commodore had been asleep, his principal officer would have had him awakened, and made acquainted with the fact of a deputation being in waiting for an audience with him, that he might receive it ; and to impress upon him the propriety and necessity for me, bearing a friendly letter from the Commodore, being received immediately ; for if I was not, I must consider it a premeditated insult, and go away and report the circumstance.

“I was quite satisfied of the insincerity of the statement relating to the Governor being asleep, from the manner of the attendant, and from the fact of Moung Pogan asking Mr. Edwards to go up to the Governor, and indeed from his appearing at the Governor’s when we arrived—for, when we were getting our horses to ride up, this Moung Pogan appeared, and was asked by Captain Latter if the Governor knew we were coming, and he said he did not know ; then Captain Latter said, ‘ You had better go up, and say that we are coming ;’ to which he answered, ‘ I am a subject of Burmah, and cannot take a message to my Lord the Governor, unless I had permission from him.’

“Finding, after some little time, that the officer alluded to above did not return, I conceived it to be my duty to return, and report the circumstance ; in doing so, I returned most leisurely, to give them time to send after me with an apology ; and not finding my boat at the landing-place, I waited her arrival (for the same purpose), rather than come off earlier in a merchant-ship’s boat, which was offered me.”

On their return to the frigate, Commander Fishbourne reported (as above) to Commodore Lambert the treatment the deputation had received. The Commodore appears to have instantly decided upon the course he would pursue :—without affording time or opportunity to the Governor to explain or apologise for what had occurred, without referring the matter to the Government of India, which he might have done in a few days, or to the Government of Ava as he had done before, he resolved, that very day, to enter upon hostilities with the Burmese nation. “The Commodore forthwith

directed a boat to be sent to summon some of the English residents from the shore. On their arrival, he warned them to be prepared to leave the town during the afternoon, and requested them to give notice to all other British subjects. He ordered all the boats of the squadron to assist in bringing them off, and a steamer to be off the wharf to cover their embarkation." \* They were allowed to leave, without molestation.

"The British subjects, men, women and children, to the amount of several hundred, took refuge during the afternoon on board the shipping in the river, and before the evening had set in, the vessels had commenced dropping down the river." †

"It was dark before the Commodore issued orders to seize what was usually styled the Yellow Ship.' ‡ This ship, which belonged to the King of Ava, was anchored a little above the squadron. The same day the following notification of blockade appeared :—Let the reader recollect that all these occurrences took place on the afternoon and night of the 6th January, in consequence of the deputation of that day '*having been kept waiting for a full quarter of an hour in the sun.*'" §

"NOTIFICATION.

"*In virtue of authority from the Governor-General of India, I do hereby declare the rivers of Rangoon, the Bassein, and the Salween above Moulmein, to be in a state of blockade; and, with the view to the strict enforcement thereof, a competent force will be stationed in, or near, the entrance of the said rivers immediately.*

"Neutral vessels, lying in either of the blockaded rivers, will be permitted to retire within twenty days from the commencement of the blockade.

"Given under my hand, on board Her Britannic Majesty's frigate *Fox*, off the town of Rangoon, the 6th of January, 1852.

'GEORGE R. LAMBERT,

"*Commodore in Her Britannic Majesty's Navy.*

"By command of the Commodore,

"J. L. SOUTHEY, *Secretary.*"

\* P. 46. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid. § P. 72. Captain Latter's Narrative.

Let us now pause for a moment to recapitulate the facts which we have been narrating. It has been seen that Commodore Lambert, setting aside the instructions he had received, refused to communicate with the former Governor of Rangoon, on the plea of a long list of fresh complaints having been preferred against him; and that the Governor-General of India, whilst refusing to espouse those grievances, had sanctioned the course which the Commodore had taken upon himself to pursue.

We have seen how Commodore Lambert entered into correspondence with the Court of Ava, although instructed not to do so until he had been refused reparation by the Governor; and how he remained off Rangoon, waiting the reply, which he peremptorily demanded in thirty-five days, notwithstanding that the Governor-General had intimated to him that, pending the return of an answer, he might proceed to the Persian Gulf; and we have seen that these deviations from his instructions received the sanction of the Governor-General of India.

Need we wonder at what followed? In the teeth of an express injunction, that, even should the reply to his demand for redress be unfavourable, no act of hostility was to be committed, "*nor until definite instructions regarding such hostilities shall be given by the Government of India,*"\* Commodore Lambert commenced hostilities, by seizing the King's ship, and declaring the coast in a state of blockade, and this notwithstanding that he had himself five days previously, in his letter to Sir John Littler, declared his belief *that the King of Ava was sincere in his promise of reparation, "and would fully act up to what he had promised:"* and to crown all, let it be added that these hostile acts were committed before the answer to the King of Ava (which the latter believed Commodore Lambert was himself carrying to Calcutta) could have been received by the Governor-General of India, he being at that time in camp

\* P. 14.

at Benares. It may be added that, when received, it elicited from the Indian Government the following testimony to its pacific and conciliatory character.

“The letter addressed by the Ministers of the King of Ava to the Government of India was friendly in its tone, and entirely satisfactory in its tenor. The Court of Ava promised at once to remove the Governor of Rangoon, and to inquire into, in order to redress, the injuries complained of.

“If there had been any good reason to doubt the sincerity of these assurances, their prompt fulfilment must have cleared away those doubts. The offending Governor was at once removed, and his successor took his place at Rangoon.” \*

And here I will only mention for future comment the fact, the almost incredible fact, that there does not appear in the whole of the papers presented to Parliament one word or syllable of remonstrance or remark on the part of the Governor-General in vindication of his own authority—no, not even after Commodore Lambert, as if in very derision and mockery, had in his notification declared the coast in a state of blockade, “*in virtue of authority from the Governor-General of British India.*” †

The conduct of the Governor of Rangoon is now a subject of minor importance—the question for the statesman, the historian, and the moralist is—were we justified, whatever his behaviour was, with the known friendly disposition of the King, in commencing war against the Burmese nation? Let us, however, see if the papers before us will throw any light upon the origin of the treatment which the English deputation received at the house of the Governor.

And in the first place, as it is only fair that he should be heard on his own defence, I insert a letter of explanation addressed by the Governor of Rangoon to the Governor-General of India. The letter bears no date, but it was delivered to Commodore Lambert on the 8th January:—

“LETTER DELIVERED TO COMMODORE LAMBERT BY A DEPUTATION  
“FROM THE GOVERNOR OF RANGOON.

“I, MAHAMENGHLA MENG KHANNYGYAN, appointed by the King of Ava (here follow the Royal titles) and by the great Ministers of State, after due consultation), to rule all the Southern Districts (*i.e.*, from Prome to Martaban, including Rangoon), and to have my residence at Rangoon, inform the English rulers and war-chiefs :

“That in conformity with the demand made by the English rulers, that the former Governor of Rangoon should be removed from his situation, on account of having oppressed and maltreated British merchants trading with the port of Rangoon, and in order that a proper person might be appointed as Governor of Rangoon who would be capable of protecting the merchants and poor people, the former Governor was recalled to the royal presence. A letter was sent to the English rulers, informing them that a proper investigation into all complaints should be made, and I arrived at Rangoon.

“Being actuated by the highest feelings of friendship to Commodore Lambert, whilst I was intending to send for him, the interpreter, Edwards, came and told me that he had come to acquaint me that Commodore Lambert wished to have an interview with me ; and, as I was fearful that any of the others might behave discourteously, and not according to the rules of etiquette, I decreed that the interpreter, Edwards, might come with the letter or communication. But after some time, four inferior officers, an American clergyman, called Kincaid, and the interpreter Edwards, came in a state of intoxication, and, contrary to custom, entered the compound on horseback ; and whilst I was asleep, and the Deputy-Governor was waking me, used violent and abusive language. They then went away, and conveyed an irritating message to the Commodore ; and that officer, listening to their improper and unbecoming representations, and with a manifest inclination to implicate the two nations in war, on the 6th of January, 1852, at night, with secrecy, took away the ship belonging to His Majesty the King of Ava.

“I, however, in consequence of there being a treaty of peace between the two nations, did not re-seize the vessel ; and though they were the bearers of a Royal message, on account of their unjustifiable conduct.\* The frigate stuck on the shore, near Dallah. I did not, however, molest them, or destroy them, but acted worthily to these unworthy men ; and I now represent this conduct of Commodore Lambert to the English rulers, who came from one country to another, and behaved in a manner unbecoming an Ambassador.”†

Passing by the charge of “intoxication” as unworthy of

\* *Sic* in orig.

† P. 40.

notice, we come to the real ground of offence in the fact of "four *inferior* officers" having, "contrary to custom, entered the compound on horseback," or in other words, having ridden, without invitation, into the open court of the Governor's palace. The reader, if he has perused Mr. Craufurd's interesting narrative of his mission to Ava, in 1826, or if he enjoy the pleasure of the acquaintance of that best living authority upon the habits of the Burmese, will have no difficulty in understanding the cause of the unseemly wrangle which took place between the British deputation and the Governor's attendants. One of the gravest questions of Burmese etiquette was involved in the approach of a visitor, whether on an elephant or on horseback, to the Governor's residence. The English officers outraged, perhaps unconsciously, his most cherished sense of dignity and decorum, in riding into the Governor's compound. They had no right, being subordinate in rank, to a formal reception. Commodore Lambert was alone entitled to that honour, and the preliminary arrangements for their meeting would have, perhaps, called for the display of great tact and temper. In all probability, the settling of the ceremonial of an interview would have taken more time than the negotiation for the payment of the thousand pounds. But, surely, Englishmen, who have the most formal Court in Christendom, ought not to be the least tolerant of Asiatic ceremonies. Commander Fishbourne seems to have thought it quite sufficient that Captain Latter despatched MOUNG POGAN a little in advance of the deputation "to say that we are coming." What should we think of an American deputation who required us to dispense with our Lord Chamberlain, Gold-sticks, and Beef-eaters, and receive them after the simple fashion of the White House at Washington? Might we not probably doubt if they were sober?

In a word, the Governor was "asleep"—*anglicè*, "not at home," to avoid the embarrassment and danger of an interview. But he did not refuse to receive the Commodore's letter; he

requested Mr. Edwards to bring it, and moreover, according to Commander Fishbourne's statement, Mounng Pogan and the attendants in the Governor's compound begged to be allowed to convey the letter to their master. But I find that the Governor-General of India, in a long and elaborate Minute of February 12th, in which the incidents of the rupture are recapitulated, admits the breach of etiquette on the part of our officers:—

“*Assuming,*” says the Governor-General, “*that there was in the deputation of these officers a neglect of strict form,* although (be it observed) no such forms had been attended to on his own part, by the Governor of Rangoon, whose letter had been conveyed to the Commodore by officers of the humblest rank, and admittance had been freely granted to them; *admitting, I say, that ceremonial had not been duly observed,* the omission affords no justification whatever for the insult and contumely which were publicly heaped upon these officers, the known agents, for the time, of the Government they served.”

And again,

“The persons of the officers were known, their mission was known, their approach had been announced; *and although the omission of ceremonial form to which I have alluded might have given to the Governor a plausible pretext for declining to receive the officers in person,* his own conduct in the transmission of his communications had greatly weakened that pretext; while nothing could justify the gross, deliberate, and studied affront which was put upon the British Government, in the person of its officers, conveying a communication on its behalf to the Representative of the King of Ava.”\*

The same loose and illogical reasoning which I have before had to notice characterises these passages from the Governor-General's “Minute.” What could possibly be more inconclusive than the argument, if I may call it so, in the above extract, where, after admitting the breach of etiquette on the part of our officers, it is contended that the Governor of Rangoon had no right to complain, because he had himself sent letters to Commodore Lambert, “by officers of the humblest rank, and admittance had been freely granted to



them." This might have been a valid plea if the complaint of the Governor had been that his visitors were of too low a rank ; but it was just the reverse—the very thing desired by him was, that the Commodore would follow his example, and forward his letter by a person in the humble position of Mr. Edwards, or one of his own attendants. The embarrassment of the Governor arose from his being called on to give audience to visitors who were not his equals in rank, and who yet could not be treated as inferiors or messengers. To Englishmen, all this appears excessively childish, and it is because it does so that an English Governor need not trouble himself about such matters ; not so with the Burmese :—“ With them,” says the Governor-General in the same “ Minute,” “ forms are essential substance, and the method of communication and the style of address are not words, but acts.”\* And it is worthy of notice that, at a subsequent stage of this affair, in the “ Minute ” for the guidance of General Godwin, when he was despatched in command of the expedition to Rangoon, the Governor-General, after ordering him in a certain contingency to arrange a meeting with the chief officer of the King of Ava, adds :—“ The forms of such meetings should be arranged previously, and a record made of them ; it being understood that they are to be the recognised forms of reception of the British agent for the future.”† It is a most perplexing fact throughout these papers, that, although it is apparent that the Governor-General perceives the rashness of the acts of Commodore Lambert, and even provides against their repetition in future, and whilst it is impossible to doubt that he must feel the humiliation of having his authority entirely set aside—yet not one word falls from him to show that he was more than a passive looker-on at the contemptuous disregard of his own instructions !

But to return to the scene of operations before Rangoon, where, as will be recollected, Commodore Lambert had de-

\* P. 66.

† P. 83.



clared the coast of Burmah in a state of blockade, and seized the King's ship, because his officers had been kept a "full quarter of an hour" waiting in the sun.

Much has been said about the arrogance of the Burmese, their contempt for other nations, and their desire to enter upon hostilities with the English. The papers before us prove, on the contrary, that they felt the utmost dread of our power. A covey of partridges with a hawk in view, ready to make its fell swoop, or a flock of sheep with a wolf's eyes glaring into the fold, could not shrink more timidly from that terrible and irresistible foe than did the Burmese officials at the prospect of a hostile collision with England. Captain Latter says that so great was their apprehension when the Commodore seized the King's ship, that "they even seemed alarmed for the safety of their own heads."\*

"On Wednesday, the 7th January, at day-break, Her Majesty's Steamer, *Hermes*, took the King's ship in tow, and the whole squadron proceeded down the river a short distance, the frigate remaining a little below Dallah."† I must here introduce the reader to an interesting personage, in the Governor of Dallah.

"But whilst the conduct of the Rangoon authorities was so unsatisfactory," says Captain Latter, in his narrative of the earlier events before the arrival of the new Governor, "a marked exception existed in the person of the Governor of Dallah, a town on the other side of the river. Commodore Lambert, from information he had received of the favourable disposition of the Governor, had paid him an unofficial visit, in order, personally, to impress upon an officer of his rank and respectable character, his (the Commodore's) peaceful views and wishes. The Commodore was received by the Dallah Governor with the greatest courtesy and respect; and throughout the whole of the subsequent annoying transactions the conduct of the Dallah Governor was all that could be expected from a good man and a gentleman."‡

Let us now continue the narrative of the events of the 7th of January, as they are given to us by Captain Latter.

\* Captain Latter's Narrative, p. 47.

† P. 47.

‡ P. 43.

“During the morning of this day, the Dallah Governor came off, being sent by the Governor of Rangoon to see what he could do in the business. The Commodore informed him that, in consideration of his (the Commodore’s) personal regard for him, and as a mark of the appreciation in which he held his admirable conduct during the whole time the expedition had been lying off Rangoon, he would in a measure deviate from his first intentions, and that he would again open communications with the present Governor, if that officer would come himself on board his frigate and express his regret for the insult that he had offered to the British flag, in the persons of the deputation sent to him the previous day: The Dallah Governor took his leave, and, after some hours, the Under-Governor of Rangoon, with the interpreter, Moung Pogan, made his appearance. He was the bearer of a letter\* from the Governor, declaring that he really was asleep when the deputation reached him; that he did not wish to see a deputation of inferior officers; that he would see the Commodore, and wished the Commodore to go to him. He did not in the slightest degree express regret or sorrow for what had occurred. The Commodore informed the Under-Governor that he would not swerve from the ultimatum he had already given through the Governor of Dallah, and he gave him till noon of the next day to make up his mind. A good deal more conversation took place, owing to the Under-Governor endeavouring to shake the Commodore’s determination. Both he and the others contradicted themselves every few minutes; now asserting that the Governor was asleep at the time the deputation came to his door; next asking why Mr. Edwards did not come to him when he sent to call him. At one time the Under-Governor denied being at the interview in which Mr. Edwards complained of having been threatened with a dagger; then, when pressed, acknowledging that he was at the interview, but that he had never seen or heard anything about it. It would be as tedious as it would be unnecessary to enter into a detail of all the lies and subterfuges they were guilty of, till at last they left the frigate, when they complained of the seizure of the King’s ship. The Commodore informed them that he had seized it because it was the King’s ship; that had it been a common Burmese merchant-ship he would not have taken possession of it; and that he seized it as much for the purpose of showing them that the acts of subordinates, if not promptly disowned and punished by those whom they represented, would be inevitably visited on the principals; *that he had no doubt that when the King of Ava became acquainted with the insolent conduct of his subordinates to those who came to make a friendly communication, refusing to receive such communication, and thus jeopardising his Throne, he would visit them with condign punishment*; that if the Governor of Rangoon wished to avoid

\* P. 43.

such a fate he had only to accede to his (the Commodore's) demands in everything; that then, when all his demands had been fully complied with, he would give back the King's ship, and salute the flag of Burmah with a royal salute. He furthermore impressively added that, until further instructions came from the Governor-General of India, of which they would be duly informed, nothing should induce him to act aggressively, unless they commenced hostilities themselves; and he concluded by saying that, should any detriment occur to the King of Ava, from what had occurred, it would wholly rest upon the head of the Governor of Rangoon."\*

It will be seen that the difficulty between the Commodore and the Governor turns still upon a point of etiquette. The Governor complains of the deputation of "inferior officers," wishes to see the Commodore himself, and asks him to come on shore to him. The latter insists upon the former going on board his ship to make an apology, instead of which the Governor of Rangoon sends his Deputy-Governor, for he himself would probably prefer death to the dishonour which he would suffer in the eyes of his people if he were to submit to the humiliating terms proposed to him. And I will here mention the fact that when these conditions were made known to the Governor-General of India he, *without comment*, expunged from the ultimatum the harsh condition requiring a visit to the Commodore's ship, and merely demanded a written apology.† But this altercation between two subordinate officers is a matter of secondary importance, the real question being whether Lord Dalhousie, the Governor-General of India, who adopted as his own all Commodore Lambert's acts, was justified in commencing hostilities against the Burmese nation after the proofs afforded of the fair and conciliatory disposition of the king. The passage in the above extract which I have marked with italics appears to me to decide the question, for there we find the Commodore himself declaring, *after* he had seized the royal ship, his belief that the king was still actuated by such just and friendly feelings that he would visit with condign punish-

\* P. 47.

† P. 53.

ment those who had insulted the deputation. *What possible pretence could there be then for committing an act of hostility against him?*

During the next day, Thursday, the 8th, the Dallah Governor came on board the frigate and stated that "he was very anxious that the Commodore should give up the King's ship, as that any punishment the King might inflict upon his servants for its loss might be partially visited upon him, as the ship was taken away in the waters between his Government and that of the Governor of Rangoon."\* This request was refused, but as a mark of esteem for the Governor of Dallah the Commodore prolonged the time for the Rangoon Governor to accede to his terms from noon till sunset. The Commodore now received a message from the Governor of Rangoon "to the effect that if he attempted to take the King of Ava's ship out of the river he would fire on him."†

I have already stated that on this day a letter of explanation from the Governor of Rangoon‡ to the Governor-General of India was delivered by a deputation to Commodore Lambert to be forwarded to Calcutta.

Now follows the catastrophe, which must be described in Commodore Lambert's own words:—

"Shortly after daylight this morning (January 10th) I weighed, and caused the merchant vessels to follow me. They were assisted and guarded by the East India Company's steam-vessel *Phlegethon*, and the boats of this ship. *On my arrival off the great stockade I anchored, and found it occupied by a considerable force.* An immense number of large war-boats, with guns mounted in them, were also lying close to the shore and at the entrance of a small creek under the walls of the stockade, and were fully manned. Their behaviour was exceedingly threatening, but I refrained from interfering with them, as I had promised yesterday that I would not fire on the Burmese first.

"Her Majesty's steam-sloop *Hermes*, with the King of Ava's ship in tow, passed us at half-past nine, when the stockade opened a sharp cannonade on her Majesty's ship *Fox*, which was instantly returned with

\* P. 48.

† P. 41.

‡ *Ante*, p. 419.

shot and shell, and the Burmese battery was in a short time silenced. On the smoke clearing away not a person was to be seen on the shore or in the boats.\*

“*Our fire, I have no doubt, must have done great execution, for I have reason to believe that at least 3,000 men were opposed against us. One or two of the enemy’s shot struck the Fox, but did very trifling damage. Their shot in general fell short, a few only passing over us, and their small arms did no execution.*

“I then sent the *Phlegethon* and the boats of the *Fox* close in shore to destroy the war-boats, which was easily accomplished, and their guns spiked or thrown into the river. Their crews, being unable to stand our fire, had fled on the first broadside.

“The *Hermes* in the meantime engaged a stockade on the opposite side of the river, which had opened a fire on her. Her heavy guns and a few rockets soon silenced this battery, and compelled the Burmese to retire.” †

A word or two in the way of recapitulation. On the 6th, at night, Commodore Lambert seized the King’s ship, which he held in his possession at anchor opposite the town for three days, during which time the Burmese made no attempt to retake it; but, on the contrary, conciliatory visits were paid to the Commodore by the authorities of the highest rank in the neighbourhood, short of the Governor of the district; and letters of explanation to the Governor-General and to Commodore Lambert, as well as friendly messages, were forwarded from the Governor of Rangoon himself. There is no reason to suppose that any act of hostility would have been committed had the King’s ship been merely kept at anchor in the power of the British. But to have allowed a Burmese ship of war to be towed out of the river by foreigners, passing under the

\* On the news of this event reaching England it gave rise to a discussion in the House of Lords, when the following remark was made by Lord Derby, then Prime Minister (April 5th, 1852) :—

“On receiving information of the insults offered to Commander Fishbourne, Commodore Lambert said it was impossible that he could continue communications with such a Government, and actually withdrew; *but unfortunately, as I think, by way of retaliation for the insults offered to his officer, taking on himself without previous instructions to seize a vessel of the King of Ava, which he carried with him.*”

great stockade or battery without molestation, would have involved the disgrace and destruction of those who were responsible to the King of Ava for the protection of his property. Notice was therefore given that if the Commodore attempted to remove the King's ship out of the river he would be fired upon, when, as if determined to force a collision, taking his own vessel, the *Fox*, opposite the great stockade, he there dropped anchor. The *Hermes* passed with the King's ship in tow, and the stockade opened a fire, apparently with no other object but to save the honour of the Burmese flag, for upon the discharge of a broadside from the *Fox* the battery was silenced and the garrison fled. "Great execution," we are told, was done by our fire. I hope not, for in the eyes of God and of just men every life sacrificed must, I fear, be regarded as a case of murder.

Let us suppose that, instead of Rangoon, the scene of these operations had been at Charleston. There is at present pending between this country and the United States a question of difficulty and delicacy, arising out of the conduct of the authorities of South Carolina at Charleston, who have seized a British sailor, on no better plea than that his skin is not so white as that of his captors, and subjected him to confinement in a common gaol, until the departure of his vessel. We shall suppose that the commander of our squadron on that station, Commodore Lambert by name, has been despatched to demand redress. On his arrival at Charleston, he finds the Governor such an impracticable pro-slavery character, that he addresses a letter of complaint to the Federal Government at Washington, in reply to which he receives a conciliatory answer, assuring him that everything possible shall be done to remedy the grievance. On announcing the receipt of this communication to his own Government, the Commodore adds, "I am of opinion that the *President* is sincere, and that his Government will fully act up to what he has promised." \* Before this

\* *Ante*, p. 409.

announcement has reached London, where it would be made the subject of complimentary remark by the Minister of the Crown,\* we will suppose that an insult has been offered by the Governor of South Carolina to some officers of the British squadron—the bearers of a letter from the Commodore. A ship of war belonging to the Government of the United States, lying at Charleston, is instantly seized, and, notwithstanding notice was given that, if an attempt should be made to carry her off, the Commodore's ships would be fired upon from the shore, she is towed out to sea, the American battery opening fire as they pass, and receiving in return a broadside which does "great execution." What would have been the response to this news when it reached England? Can any one doubt that one unanimous cry would have been raised for the disgrace and punishment of Commodore Lambert? And why is a different standard of justice applied in the case of Burmah? Ask your own conscience, reader, if you be an Englishman, whether any better answer can be given than that America is powerful, and Burmah weak.

It might be expected that, having carried off a ship of war and killed a number of the Burmese forces, sufficient "satisfaction" had been obtained for a claim of £920. But the coast of Burmah was still declared in a state of blockade.

\* When the news of the removal of the Governor of Rangoon reached England, and before the subsequent events were known, it elicited from the representatives of the Whig Administration in the *House of Lords* the following remarks :—"The events proved," said the Marquis of Lansdowne, "the propriety and justice of the Commodore's mode of proceeding : for that letter addressed to the King of Ava was taken into consideration by him, and his Majesty felt that reparation was due to us, and immediately removed the Governor from his post. *I have no reason to presume that the redress asked for will not fairly be given. The course taken by the King has been extremely just ;* and he has sent two persons to the spot, in order to inquire into the various acts of injustice, and settle the amount of compensation to be paid in respect of them." Long before these observations were made (February 16th, 1852), Commodore Lambert had carried off this "just" king's ship, and done "great execution" amongst his subjects.



On the day after the removal of the King's ship, the following petition from the resident merchants, prepared at the instance of the Governor, was sent by a flag of truce to Commodore Lambert, but no answer was returned :—\*

*Petition from the Armenian, Mogul, Soorattce, Nurrapoor, Parsce, Chuliah, and Mussulman Inhabitants and Merchants of Rangoon, to Commodore Lambert.*

*January 11th, 1852.*

“The two great countries being in peace, your petitioners have continued with their wives and children for many years to reside and trade in this country.

“The late Governor (of Rangoon) having been dismissed for unjustifiable and improper conduct, was taken to the Golden Feet (capital of Ava), in obedience to the royal order, for punishment.

“Subsequently, the Aye Bain (present Governor) having arrived, was prepared to meet and discuss with the Commodore whatever remained to be adjusted. *Not having been enabled to do so, he has sent for and desired your petitioners to make the following representation respecting the communication made to the Governor of Dallah, viz.*

“That he is willing to abide by the provisions of the Vandaloo Treaty.

“To agree to a Resident being appointed.

“To pay the sum of upwards of 9,000 rupees.

“And to have a Residency House erected.

“In accordance with the Royal order, the above subjects were to have been discussed by the two great men in an amicable and friendly manner, but Commodore Lambert has not given him an opportunity of doing so.

“Your petitioners and the merchants, both great and small, at Rangoon and at the capital of Ava amount to upwards of 600 souls, ‘who are in a condition of being stranded in shallow water.’

“Your petitioners, therefore, most humbly entreat you, in the name of Almighty God, to have pity on them, and to save and protect them from ruin and destruction.”

Abandoning in despair any further attempts to propitiate Commodore Lambert, the Burmese now addressed themselves to *Colonel Bogle, Commissioner in the Tenasserim Provinces*, a territory which was wrested from Burmah in the war of 1826, and which lies upon the frontier of that empire. To him the Governor of Rangoon forwarded, on the 16th January, a letter



for the Governor-General of India, the contents of which were almost a repetition of the letter delivered by a deputation from the same functionary to Commodore Lambert on the 8th. The Governor of Martaban, a Burmese port situated opposite to Moulmein, the principal sea-port of Tenasserim, forwarded also at the same time the following letter to Colonel Bogle :—

*“ The Governor of Martaban to the British Commissioner at Moulmein.*

*January 21st, 1852.*

“ Tikla Myo tsa Motama Myo Mingyee (Martaban Governor) Mingyee Maha thinka yah, informs the Moulmein Mingyee and Ayabing Ming (Commissioner and Principal Assistant Commissioner) that, forasmuch as peace and tranquillity is the sole object in view, between the two great kingdoms, a friendly intercourse being established, traffic has hitherto been carried on between the merchants of the two countries without interruption. In consequence, however, of complaints having been preferred against the former Rangoon Myowoon, that he oppressed foreign merchants, certain English officers were despatched on a mission to represent them. These officers arrived, and thirty-five days being fixed as the period within which their despatches were to be transmitted, and the Royal answer received, *while yet the mandate issued from the Shuay Shoot Tah (the Golden Royal Court) was on its way to India, there came the intelligence that the English officers had attacked and carried off the King's ship out of the port of Rangoon. Now the Governor-General of India simply appointed the Mission to treat; they had no instructions to fight;* and, should this capture of His Majesty's ship prove the occasion of a fierce war, the trade between the two countries will be sacrificed for an unprofitable quarrel. It is not right that there should be a war. The character of those in authority depends upon peace, and a free and uninterrupted trade; hence, therefore, the despatch of these letters; and it is requested that the English Government will return a full and explicit answer to them.”

The common sense and logic of the above, as well as its philanthropic sentiments, present, I am sorry to say, a most favourable contrast to the Christian side of this correspondence. This letter ought, in fact, to have been written by the Governor-General of India to Commodore Lambert, calling on him to justify his seizure of the royal ship, whilst the King of Ava's letter was still on its way to India, and reminding him that he was sent on a mission to treat, but that he had strict injunctions not to fight.

In this and the other Burmese letters written after the rupture, the seizure of the King's ship is alluded to with an emphasis which shows that, although certainly unacquainted with the writings of Vattel or Puffendorf, the writers are well aware that it constituted an act of war; and since no declaration of war had been published, and seeing that they still regarded Commodore Lambert as merely the bearer of a communication to their Government from a superior power, to whom an answer conceding all that was demanded had been returned by the King of Ava, they were perplexed at the conduct of the English commander, and sometimes almost doubted whether he was really the person he represented himself to be. "Unlike a man of the world, son of a great country," says the Governor of Rangoon, "and actuated only by a wish to create a quarrel, he *covertly unmoored and carried off the great ship.*" And in another letter he says, "On the 6th January, at midnight, Commodore Lambert took away the ship belonging to His Majesty the King of Ava. On the following day, I sent the Deputy-Governor of Rangoon to represent to Commodore Lambert that the act of taking His Majesty's ship *by stealth, and unjustly, was in no wise in accordance with the acts proper to two great nations.*" † "In a manner unbecoming the sons of a great nation," says the Governor of Bassein, "*you secretly stole and took away the ship belonging to the King of Ava.*" ‡ And again, to quote from another letter from the Rangoon Governor: "Commodore Lambert expresses surprise at having been fired at by the officers in charge of the stockades of Dumont and Thilawa, but it is a matter of greater surprise that the Royal ship of His Majesty should have been seized at midnight, contrary to the custom of great nations and the rules of justice." § In fact, throughout all the subsequent correspondence, there is, on the part of the Burmese, a constant recurrence to this outrageous act of violence. They attached comparatively little import-

\* P. 58.

† P. 63.

‡ P. 71.

§ P. 56.

ance to the blockade of their ports ; \* but neither the French nor the Americans could apparently have felt more keenly than they did the insult offered in the seizure, "at midnight," of the King's ship.

Let the reader of the few remaining pages of this narrative always bear in mind that the two contending parties, from this moment, stand in the following relative positions towards each other. The English complain that the Burmese have extorted 9,948 rupees (a fraction under a thousand pounds) from British subjects, and that a deputation of their officers has been kept waiting "a full quarter of an hour" in the sun ; and, on the other side, it must be remembered that the English have carried off the only ship of war belonging to the Burmese Government, (worth probably ten times as much as 9,948 rupees), doing in the act "great execution" amongst their troops, without suffering any loss or injury themselves, and that they have established a blockade of all the Burmese ports.

I have said that a letter was sent by the Governor of Rangoon, through Commodore Lambert, to the Governor-General of India, on the 8th of January, two days after the seizure of the King's ship. The reader is requested to re-peruse that letter.† It will be seen that, after an explanatory allusion to his own conduct towards the deputation, which he charges with having been intoxicated, the Governor makes a complaint that the Commodore had a "manifest inclination to implicate the two nations in war ;" and he concludes with these words, "I now represent this conduct of Commodore Lambert to the English rulers, who came from one country to another, and behaved in a manner unbecoming an ambassador."

The reply to the Government of India is dated January 26th. The letter begins with an expression of extreme surprise that the Governor of Rangoon had listened to the falsehoods of his servants respecting the inebriety of the officers composing

\* P. 68.

† *Ante*, p. 419.

the deputation, and then proceeds to complain of the disrespectful conduct shown to them "at the gates of the Governor's palace." \*

"If," continues the dispatch, "those officers were inferior in rank, as the Governor now declares, and if the customs of his country were thereby violated, or any apparent disrespect were shown to the Governor, or his Sovereign, the departure from custom ought to have been properly represented by the Governor, when the error would, doubtless, have been corrected."

After declaring that the Government of India would not allow its officers to suffer insult without requiring reparation, the letter concludes with the following specific demands:—

"1. The Governor will express, in writing, to the Government of India, his deep regret that Commander Fishbourne and the officers deputed by Commodore Lambert to the Governor, should have been treated with disrespect, and exposed to public insult at his own residence, on the 6th of January.

"2. He will consent to pay immediately the compensation already demanded of 9,948 rupees, for injuries done to Captain Sheppard and Captain Lewis.

"3. He will consent to receive, with the honour due to the Representative of the British Government, the accredited Agent whom, in accordance with the 7th clause of the Treaty of Vandaboo, the Government is prepared to appoint.

"If these concessions shall be made, the British Government will agree as follows:—

"1. The Government of India will depute an officer of rank to proceed to Rangoon in order to adjust the final settlement of the questions above mentioned, and to arrange the details for the reception of the Agent. The preliminaries having been settled by the subordinates of the chiefs, a meeting shall take place, and all differences shall be composed.

"2. On this settlement being completed, the ship belonging to the King of Ava, which has been seized by the squadron, shall be released.

"3. The blockade shall be removed, and entire concord shall be restored.

"If these demands shall be refused, the British Government will thereafter exact for itself the reparation which is due for the wrong it has suffered."

The reader will observe that not the slightest allusion is made to the complaint of the Governor of Rangoon respecting the seizure of the King's ship. On the contrary, it is assumed that the British are still the aggrieved parties, to whom reparation is due, notwithstanding the capture of that vessel, and the slaughter which accompanied its removal. I ask the reader again to suppose that a similar despatch, under the like circumstances, had been received from America, would the complaint in such a case have passed unnoticed ?

I give the answer of the Rangoon Governor in full. The letters of the Burmese authorities, translated into English, be it remembered, by a hostile pen, are remarkable for their terseness and clear common sense, and offer a striking contrast to the lengthy, rambling, and inconclusive reasoning which characterises the British part of the correspondence—

*“ The Governor of Rangoon to Mr. Halliday.*

*“ Rangoon, February 2nd, 1852.*

“Mahamengla Mengkhomygyan (with titles), Governor of Rangoon informs Mr. Frederick James Halliday, Secretary to the Government of India (with titles).

“With reference to the demand of an expression of deep regret for the circumstance of the deputation of officers sent by Commodore Lambert on the 6th of January last, being said to have been publicly treated with disrespect ;

“With reference to the being willing immediately to make good the sum of 9,948 rupees, said to have been extorted from Captains Lewis and Sheppard by the former Governor of Rangoon ;

“With reference to being willing to receive a Resident with all honour due to his rank and station, in conformity to the VIIth Article of the Treaty of Yandaboo ;

“That, with reference to the above three points, if they are acceded to by the Governor of Rangoon, first, the ship belonging to the King of Ava which has been seized, will be given back ; secondly, the blockade now existing will be raised, and perfect concord restored.

“With reference to the above points contained in your letter, I, the Governor of Rangoon, taking them into my careful consideration give the following reply :—

“On the 6th of January, 1852, Commodore Lambert, at midnight,

took away the ship belonging to His Majesty the King of Ava. On the following day I sent the Deputy-Governor of Rangoon to represent to Commodore Lambert that the act of taking His Majesty's ship by stealth, and unjustly, was in nowise in accordance with the acts proper to two great nations.

“Commodore Lambert stated in reply, that his reason for seizing the King's ship was because a deputation of subordinate officers sent by him had not been received.

“Commodore Lambert then wrote a letter to the Prime Ministers of Ava, as also transmitting one to myself, which were delivered to one of my subordinate officers. These letters were to the effect that he, Commodore Lambert, had seized the King's ship because the pecuniary claims under discussion had not been satisfied.

“What Commodore Lambert expressed, as above stated, both verbally and in writing, was not in conformity with the custom of great nations. This the Government of India are aware of ; moreover, being aware of it, they have written a friendly letter, evincing their wish that the long-existing good understanding between the two nations should be renewed, and commerce and communication restored as they were before.

“Therefore, as soon as the officer which the Government of India is prepared to appoint, in conformity with existing treaties, shall arrive, a satisfactory and amicable arrangement can be made of the payment of the 9,948 rupees extorted from Captains Lewis and Sheppard ; also with reference to the re-delivery of the King of Ava's ship, seized by Commodore Lambert.

“With reference to the question of the disrespect said to have been shown to the deputation sent with a letter by Commodore Lambert, it should be borne in mind that the English officers have been stating their own version of the case, and consequently, whilst shielding themselves, they have thrown all the blame on the other side.

Considering the sense of grievance felt by the writer, and which upon every principle of international law he was justified in feeling, remembering that not one syllable had been vouchsafed in explanation of the seizure of the King's ship, the above must be regarded as a conciliatory, nay, a most submissive communication. *What would America have said under the same circumstances ?*

No sooner did it reach the Governor-General of India than he (with the Burmese ship of war still in his power)

resolved "to exact reparation by force of arms." Orders were given for fitting out an armed expedition, and he now proclaimed as his ultimatum that, in addition to a compliance with the preceding demands, the Burmese should be compelled, as the price of peace, "in consideration of the expenses of the expedition, and of compensation for property," \* to pay ten lacs of rupees, or one hundred thousand pounds.

The "Minute," or rather the "Extract" from Dalhousie's Minute, professing to give reasons in justification of these hostile proceedings, extends over nearly five pages of the Parliamentary papers. In justice to his own reputation, its author ought to call for the unabridged publication of this "Minute." In the emasculation which it underwent at the Board of Control, it must surely have lost the essential qualities of the original. It has none of the dignity or force which properly belong to a State paper. It dwells with a minuteness quite feminine upon details respecting points of ceremonial, and breaches of etiquette; but in arguing the main questions at issue, the "Minute," in its present form, must be pronounced an unstatesmanlike, immoral, and illogical production.

These are strong words, but their truth can unfortunately be proved by evidence as strong.

The date of the Minute is February 12th. Now let it be borne in mind that up to this time there had been no ground for suspecting that the King of Ava had authorised the perpetration of any act of rudeness or injustice on the part of his servants at Rangoon towards the British officers, or that he had abandoned his intention, in the sincerity of which Lord Lansdowne, and the Governor-General of India, and Commodore Lambert themselves, had expressed their belief, of satisfying the just demands of the Indian Government. Lord Dalhousie knew that on the 7th of January, the day after the rupture at Rangoon, Commodore Lambert had written to the

\* P. 67.



Burmese Ministers at Ava, informing them of what had occurred, and concluding his letter with these words ; " Any explanation the Court of Ava may wish to make on the subject, I shall be ready to forward to the Governor-General of India." A copy of this letter was in Lord Dalhousie's hands. He knew that an interval of thirty-five days was required for the receipt of an answer to a despatch sent to Ava from Rangoon, and there was the additional time necessary for sending a steamer from Rangoon to Calcutta, which, with delays, could not fairly be calculated at less than another week, making together forty-two days. Now from January 7th, the date of Commodore Lambert's letter, to February 12th, the date of the " Minute," is just thirty-six days ; so that this hostile expedition against the Burmese nation was resolved upon before sufficient time had been allowed to the King to offer the explanation which he had been invited to give. A letter from the King was, as we shall by-and-by see, on its way, and actually reached the Governor-General's hands within a week of the date of his " Minute."

But the unstatesmanlike fault (to use the mildest term) of the " Minute," lies in this—that whereas the specific charges are directed against the Governor of Rangoon and him only, an assumption pervades the whole argument that the Burmese *Government* is the offending party :—hence the vague and confused phraseology which sometimes speaks of the " King," in some places of " Burmah," and in others of the " Governor of Rangoon." But the sole object of the paper being to justify an armed expedition against a country with which we had a treaty of peace and commerce, it must be evident that the acts and conduct of the Imperial Government, and not of one of its local officers, could alone justify a resort to hostilities ; provided always that the Government did not assume the responsibility of the acts of its servants. What would Lord Dalhousie have said if the King of Ava had insisted upon treating with the Governor of Bombay instead of himself ?



The "Minute" professes to give a very detailed recapitulation of all that had occurred at Rangoon. Entire pages are devoted to disquisitions upon controverted points of punctilio. The offence offered to the majesty and power of England, in keeping the deputation waiting in the sun "a full quarter of an hour," is discussed in all its bearings; *but there is not one syllable of allusion to the fact that Commodore Lambert had, in the teeth of instructions to the contrary, carried off a Burmese vessel of war, and done "great execution" among those who attempted to oppose him.* Now, as this recapitulation of facts is intended to justify the despatch of a hostile expedition to demand redress for certain injuries and insults, what must be said of the suppression of the one all-important fact, that we had already retaliated by force of arms, by seizing and carrying off ten times the amount of our pecuniary claim, and inflicting a hundredfold greater insult than that which had been offered to us—thus, in fact changing the relative position of the two parties, and placing the Burmese in the situation of appellants for reparation and justice? What shall we say when, after this *suppressio veri*, the Governor-General draws the following complacent deduction in favour of his "moderation and justice." \*

\* The following description of the "execution" at the Stockades, when the King's ship was carried off, is extracted from *The Second Burmese War*; a volume by Lieutenant Laurie, written at Rangoon. I give it as an illustration of the Governor-General's "moderation and forbearance."

"At length the *Hermes* came in sight, rounding the point with the Burmese prize-vessel in tow. As she passed the Stockade, guns in rapid succession were opened on the vessels of war; at the same time, volleys of musketry were discharged upon them. The *Por* immediately returned the enemy's fire by a terrific broadside; she likewise thundered forth against the war-boats which had ventured into the river. The *Hermes* then came up and poured forth her shot and shell into the line of Stockade. The *Phlegethon* steamer, likewise, did vast destruction to the works. For nearly two hours were our vessels employed in spreading ruin and dismay around. During the conflict, a large gun-boat having on board a gun of considerable calibre, and upwards of sixty armed men, was sunk by a broadside, when nearly all on board perished. Altogether, about three hundred of the enemy were killed, and about the same number

“The recital I have given in the preceding paragraphs of the course of recent events [*omitting the chief event*] will show that the original demand of the Government of India for redress was just and necessary; and that it was sought in a manner respectful to an independent nation. It will show that, a gross insult having been put upon this Government in the persons of its officers, *the Government has not been eager to take offence, or perverse in refusing amends. It has shown itself sincerely desirous to open a way to reconciliation; it has practised the utmost moderation and forbearance.*” \*

The reader will hardly think that more need be said to justify my charge of immorality: and now for a specimen of the illogical character of the “Minute.”

In alluding to the blockade which had been established by Commodore Lambert, the “Minute” seeks to justify that act by reference to the instructions he had received.

“The act of the Governor of Rangoon,” says Lord Dalhousie, “in refusing admittance to the deputation, under the circumstances of insolence and contumely which I have described, and in withholding all amends for his conduct, was rightly viewed by the Commodore as a rejection of the demand he had been sent to make. *He at once established the blockade which had been enjoined as the consequence of such rejection.*”†

Here we have it laid down that the refusal of redress by the Governor of Rangoon was rightly considered as a justification of the hostile proceedings which followed. The following extract from the original instructions given to Commodore Lambert for his guidance, by the Governor-General, will show that the very opposite course was previously enjoined:—

“The refusal of the Governor of Rangoon,” says Lord Dalhousie (October 31st), “to accede to a demand of reparation for a distinct breach of the treaty with Ava, *if it should be upheld by his Government*, would

wounded, in this first encounter with the Burmese. As the vessels proceeded down to the next Stockade, they were again fired on, but only by musketry. It was remarked, at the conclusion of these operations that the enemy probably had no intention of serious resistance, but felt themselves obliged to make some show of defence, when they saw the King's property taken off, as the heads of the leading men were at stake.”—pp. 30—31.

\* P. 66.

† P. 65.

doubtless entitle the Government of India to proceed to exact reparation by force of arms, or to inflict such punishment on the Burmese State as circumstances might seem to require. *But the Government of India could not, with justice, proceed to such extremities, until it had communicated with the Court of Ava respecting the conduct of its servant, the Governor of Rangoon, and had thereby afforded it an opportunity of disavowing his acts, and of making the reparation which he had refused to concede.*" \*

And on a subsequent occasion, on the receipt of the intelligence that Commodore Lambert, having determined to hold no communication with the first Governor of Rangoon, had sent a letter to that effect to the King of Ava, the Governor-General again enjoined that the blockade of the Burmese ports should be made contingent only upon his receiving an unfavourable answer from the King:—

*"If the King's reply should be unfavourable,"* says Lord Dalhousie (December 27th), *"the only course we can pursue which would not, on the one hand, involve a dangerous submission to injury, or, on the other hand, precipitate us prematurely into a war which moderate counsels may still enable us with honour to avert, will be to establish a blockade of the two rivers at Rangoon and Moulmein, by which the great mass of the traffic of the Burmese empire is understood to pass."* †

Nothing could be more clear or consistent with international law than these instructions for the guidance of the British commander; but no sooner does he set them aside, and begin hostilities in retaliation for the alleged acts of the Governor of Rangoon, than the Governor-General tries to justify him by an illogical deduction from his own previous despatch.—"He at once established the blockade which had been enjoined as the consequence of such rejection" (by the Governor of Rangoon) says Lord Dalhousie. There was, I repeat, no authority given to the Commodore to blockade the ports in retaliation for any act of the Governor of Rangoon—*his instructions were precisely the reverse.*

I have before alluded to Colonel Bogle, who, at the time of the rupture at Rangoon, filled the post of Commissioner in

\* P. 13.

† P. 32.

the Tenasserim Provinces, bordering on the Burmese territory. His chief residence was on the Salween river, at the port of Moulmein, nearly opposite to, and a few miles distant from Martaban, one of the principal Burmese ports. The letters of this officer are almost the only part of the correspondence which an Englishman ought to read without blushing. In perusing his despatches, it is impossible not to detect, in spite of his official reserve, and the restraints which a sense of subordination imposed on him, that he had no sympathy for the violent proceedings which were being carried on in the neighbouring port of Rangoon, and that, if the affair had been left in his hands, it might have been amicably settled in a few hours. In style as well as matter, his letters present a striking contrast to many of the loose and desultory compositions which accompany them ; and his conduct appears to have been characterised by an energy and a forbearance which bespeak at once a humane and yet resolute man.

At the commencement of the misunderstanding with the Burmese, Colonel Bogle was instructed by the Government at Calcutta to prepare against a sudden attack upon his Tenasserim frontiers.\* But far from any hostile attempts having been made on his territory, the Burmese authorities seem to have shown the most nervous anxiety to avoid a collision. On the 30th January, 1852, Colonel Bogle informs the Government of India that two messengers had come over to him from Martaban, bringing a letter to say that a party of British police had attacked the Burmese village of Pagat, that the people had driven back the police ; but being apprehensive that a more serious collision might take place, the Burmese authorities earnestly requested that measures might be taken to repress any aggressive disposition on the part of the British, and to preserve peace.

“ It appearing to me,” continues Colonel Bogle, “ from the tone of the Burmese authorities, that the intelligence they had

\* P. 15.

sent was true, and that they were actuated by a very friendly feeling, and not having received any report of the matter from any other source, I thought that the best way of settling the affair was to get into a steamer and proceed to the spot at once." In proceeding up the river, "*the steamer,*" continues Colonel Bogle, "*took the ground close to the Martaban fortification and remained fast for twenty minutes within short musket-shot of the walls. The place was well filled with men, and I observed a couple of guns mounted on the ramparts, but no advantage was taken of the steamer being aground, and we remained unmolested until the tide rose, and the Phlegethon proceeded on her voyage.*" \* Let the reader bear in mind that this incident, illustrating so strongly the pacific disposition of the Burmese, occurred three weeks after Commodore Lambert had seized the King's ship and declared the whole coast of Burmah in a state of blockade, *and whilst Martaban itself was actually blockaded by a couple of gunboats :—*

"Nor did the Burmese," continues Colonel Bogle, "appear to entertain any fears that we would annoy them. The wharf near their large pagoda and their walls on which when passing a fortnight before I did not see a single soul, were now crowded with men sitting quietly looking at us. The red flag, emblem of war, was flying arrogantly enough at many points all along the line ; but women were also to be seen seated along the bank, which indicated perfect confidence that the steamer had not suddenly appeared within pistol-shot of the place with the intention of harassing any one." †

The next day, at noon, the steamer reached Pagat, her place of destination, when, to the astonishment of Colonel Bogle, the first person that put off in a boat was the identical Martaban official who had the day before brought the letter respecting the collision at Pagat over to Moulmein. I cannot better describe what followed than in Colonel Bogle's own clear and concise language :—

"From him I learnt that during the night he had been despatched by the Governor of Martaban to summon the chief of Pagat to his presence,

\* P. 60.

† Ibid.

and to take every possible measure to prevent hostilities; and he assured me that having pulled all night, he had arrived that morning, and had, in conformity with his instructions, despatched the chief to Martaban, and caused it to be intimated to all the inhabitants of Pagat and the neighbourhood that they were to conduct themselves in the most peaceful manner possible, and to do nothing that could be offensive to the English authorities; and he begged that the people on the British side might receive similar orders.

“He was immediately assured that I had no other desire than that all should remain quiet and peaceful, and as a proof of my reluctance to avail myself of the power at my command I directed all the boats which had been taken from Pagat to be cast adrift from the stern of the *Phlegethon* and restored to the Burmese, and at the same time administering a stern warning to the recipients that if the people of Pagat, who are notorious robbers, put a foot on the British side of the river under the present state of affairs, they might chance to receive a less agreeable visit from the steamer, at whose crew and armament they gazed with considerable interest.

“Having settled the matter to the entire satisfaction of the Burmese functionary, *and received his earnest protestations of a desire to remain at peace*, I visited several of our police ports and villages, where Lieutenant Hopkinson issued such orders as seemed proper. We then returned towards Moulmein, but *again got aground under the walls of Martaban, and remained six hours hard and fast within pistol-range of the shore*. During the time (it was night) we could distinctly see crowds of Burmese around their watch-fires, but except just when the steam was blowing off with the remarkable noise which it always makes, they took no notice of us.

“Now, coupling all the circumstances of this trip with the recent communications from the Governors of Rangoon and Martaban noticed in my letter of the 27th instant, it appears to me probable that the pacific tone assumed by the Burmese is in consequence of orders from the Governor of Rangoon, to whom Martaban is now subordinate, or it may be dictated by weakness and a backward state of preparation.” \*

Remembering that at the moment when this despatch was penned at Moulmein Commodore Lambert was actually engaged in hostilities with the Burmese at Rangoon (seventy miles distant); that he, the accredited representative of British power in Burmah, was forwarding to the Government of India accusations against the Burmese of the most hostile designs—bearing these circumstances in mind it is apparent how strong

must have been the sense of justice which prompted Colonel Bogle, even at the risk of being charged with travelling out of his province, to bring to the knowledge of the Governor-General of India the above facts showing the pacific disposition of the Burmese authorities. This feeling was still more strongly evinced in the events which followed.

On the 7th February two Burmese officials called *Tseetkays*, with "gold umbrellas," crossed over from Martaban to Moulmein with a letter from the King of Ava to the Governor-General of India, which had just arrived in eleven days direct from the capital, with a request from the Governor of Martaban that Colonel Bogle would transmit it to Calcutta. After delivering the letter, enclosed in an ivory case and a red velvet cover, with all proper ceremony, "they entered into some discussion on the present state of affairs, and expressed the great anxiety of their Government that the existing differences should be amicably arranged, and the Treaty of Yandaboo maintained." \*

In perusing the following account of what passed at this interview, as given in the despatch of Colonel Bogle, it will be well to bear in mind the delicate position in which he was placed. The letter from the Government of Ava to the Governor-General of India was written in reply to the despatch sent by Commodore Lambert from Rangoon on the 7th of January, apprising them for the first time of the rupture which had occurred the day before, and offering to be the medium for transmitting any explanation or answer from the Court of Ava to the Government of India. The ministers of the "Golden Foot" feeling puzzled on learning that Commodore Lambert instead of, as they had supposed, being on his way back to Calcutta with the friendly answer to the Governor-General's letter, was blockading Rangoon, and holding possession of the King's ship, they determined, naturally enough, to forward their next letter through Colonel Bogle. The

\* P. 68.



latter, although he was evidently too conscientious to conceal his conviction of the pacific disposition of the Burmese, yet felt bound by a sense of official duty to avoid the appearance of favouring the cause of those who were regarded at that moment as in a state of actual hostility against the Government which he served ; and hence in the following account of the interview an admonitory rebuke of the *Tseetkays* and a vindication of the authority of Commodore Lambert fall from him, which, however, whilst leaving his own opinion as apparent as ever, serves only to bring out more strongly the repugnance of the Burmese to enter into further relations with that officer :—

“They were most particularly desirous,” says Colonel Bogle, “that further negotiations should not be conducted through Rangoon, and that I would do all in my power to procure a reply from the Governor-General and transmit it through Martaban, in reply to which I told him that I could do nothing more than send on the King’s letter ; that if an answer came to me I would, of course, forward it to Martaban with all despatch, but that I thought it more probable it would be sent through Commodore Lambert and the shorter route of Rangoon ; and that I had no control whatever in a matter of the kind. They did not seem at all pleased at this, but at once suggested that I might at least enable them to communicate direct with the Indian Government, by sending the Principal Assistant Commissioner (Lieutenant Hopkinson) with them to Calcutta, in which case they were prepared to do without negotiators, and go and deliver the letter themselves. Of course I declined to depute my Assistant with them, but offered them a passage in the steamer.

“They expressed great regret that affairs had not been settled peaceably at Rangoon, and that the King’s ship had been taken ; but I clearly pointed out to them that I had no power to enter upon the discussion of matters connected with that place ; and explained to them that, if there was any sincerity in their professions of a desire for peace, they should shape their conduct more in accordance with them ; and that if their Government really desired a settlement of differences, it should lose no time in forwarding proper persons with sufficient powers to Commodore Lambert, with whom alone negotiations could be carried on.

“To this the *Tseetkays* expressed some dislike, and strongly dwelt upon the circumstance that, everything having taken an unsatisfactory turn at Rangoon, it would be much better to forget all that had occurred there, and to begin the negotiations at the beginning again. I took some pains



to have it clearly explained to them that I had no power to do more than simply forward the King's letter ; but that, as regarded all negotiations, the duty of conducting them had been assigned to Commodore Lambert, and it was to him that their Government must address itself ; but the more I dwelt upon the propriety of following this course of proceeding, the more they urged the expediency of setting aside all that had already occurred, and beginning anew.

“ The circumstance of the King of Burmah having sent a letter to the Governor-General at all, and with such haste, is remarkable ; and that he should have chosen this route, probably under the supposition that, with a blockade established, there might be difficulties on the Rangoon side, would indicate much anxiety to obtain an early reply ; and, from what the *Tseethkays* said, there is no doubt that the answer will be looked for with great impatience. I may as well mention that on my alluding to the stoppage of trade and intercourse as one of the evils that had already overtaken them, consequent on the acts of their rulers, the *Tseethkays* expressed the most perfect indifference to that, and treated it as a matter of no moment whatever.” \*

Colonel Bogle forwarded immediately the letter to Commodore Lambert at Rangoon, with a request that it might be despatched by a steamer to Calcutta. “ The circumstance,” says he, in his letter to the Commodore, “ of the Burmese Government having sent a letter to the Governor-General at all, and the speed with which it has come, would certainly indicate a desire that hostilities may be averted, at least for the present ; and the very convenient opportunity which this letter will afford the Indian Government of categorically detailing its demands and intentions, induces me to attach more importance to it than it would otherwise, perhaps, deserve.” †

The King's letter was written to bring to the knowledge of the Governor-General the events which had occurred at Rangoon, and with which the reader is already familiar. Considering that the seat of government is nearly five hundred miles from the sea-coast, and that the means of obtaining correct intelligence are very inferior to those in countries where the publicity of the press checks the reports of local functionaries,

\* P. 68.

† P. 72.

the occurrences seem to have been known with remarkable accuracy by the Burmese Ministry. This may probably be attributed to the high rank of the Commissioners deputed to meet Commodore Lambert, who, we now learn for the first time, were "the Perpetual Privy Councillor, Mahameng Gyam, and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Menggyee Mengteng Raza."\* After narrating the occurrences which led to the rupture at Rangoon, and the seizure of the King's ship by Commodore Lambert, the Burmese Ministers conclude with the following very natural inquiry:—

"The communication is now made with the view of eliciting, in reply, the intentions of the English Government; and it cannot be determined whether it has deputed Commodore Lambert simply to dispose of the question relating to the merchants, or whether he has been sent to begin by an attack, which should have the effect of bringing on hostilities between the two countries."†

Before this letter reached Calcutta, Lord Dalhousie had, as we have seen, determined upon despatching an armament to the coast of Burmah, and had written his long "Minute," containing the reasons for the course he was about to take.

His Lordship's reply to the King of Ava's communication contains merely a repetition of the arguments in the "Minute"—there is, again, the same uncandid evasion of the real question at issue, the seizure of the King's ship—and once more we have a lengthened dissertation upon the breach of etiquette on the occasion of the visit of the deputation to the Governor's palace. Upon this latter point the Governor-General is really unfashionable; for he denies to the Governor of Rangoon the privilege which everybody in "good society" in London, if not in Calcutta, exercises every day. To be able to answer "not at home" with a good grace is one of the qualifications for the hall-porter of a lady patroness of Almack's; but who ever heard of such an answer being made a *casus belli* between Carlton Terrace and Belgrave Square, or even the ground for an

\* P. 69.

† P. 70.

exchange of "Minutes," or anything more warlike than a few visiting cards? The Governor-General has admitted that the informal visit attempted by the officers composing the deputation might have given a plausible pretext to the Governor of Rangoon for declining to receive them,\* but he complains of the mode in which it was done. Now I humbly submit that no course less insulting could possibly have been adopted. Mr. Crawford, in the interesting account of his mission to Ava, informs us that, owing to the great heat of the weather, all classes in Burmah, from the King to the meanest peasant, suspend their labours and seek repose in the middle of the day. To call upon a person of rank at noon on business, without a previous arrangement, is as much an act of *mauvais ton* as if a Burmese deputation (and I think they would do wisely to send one) were to come to England to see the President of the Board of Control, and insist on an interview at nine o'clock in the evening, when he was at dinner. In such a case he would be "not at home." Whether the answer were "not at home," or "asleep," it would be deprived of all offensiveness if it were in harmony with the custom of the country. In making use of the excuse which the hour of the day afforded him, the Governor of Rangoon showed a well-bred desire to avoid offering an affront to his ill-timed visitors.

One feels painfully affected, almost to humiliation, at reading page after page of such disquisitions as the following, from the pen of a Governor-General of India, in State papers, upon every sentence of which hangs the solemn question of peace or war:—

"When Commodore Lambert," says Lord Dalhousie to the King of Ava, "on the arrival of the new Governor, proposed to renew negotiations relative to the merchants who had been oppressed, the Governor intimated his readiness to receive, at any time, a communication from Commodore Lambert upon the subject. On the following day, a letter written on behalf of the British Government was addressed by the Commodore to the Governor of Rangoon. Although the present Governor and his predecessor had not observed the respect which was due, nor the custom of their

\* P. 65.

own country, and had sent their letters by the hands of men of no rank or consideration whatever, yet these persons were not rejected by the Commodore. And when he despatched his letter to the Governor of Rangoon, it was sent, not by the hands of any such inconsiderable persons, but by the officer next in rank to himself, accompanied by officers of the army and of the fleet.

“ Yet the Governor of Rangoon presumed to refuse all admittance to these officers, bearing a letter to him on the part of the British Government.

“ He not only presumed to refuse to them admittance, but he offered to them insults and indignity. The Deputy-Governor did not approach them, as your servants have falsely reported to your Majesty. No officer was deputed to them. They were approached only by the lowest; they were compelled to remain beyond the door; and were publicly subjected to disrespect and insolence, such as would have been regarded as ignominious by the meanest subordinate in your servants’ Durbar.”

The answer to this is, that the Governor’s visitors were informed by his servants that he was “asleep,” which, between gentlemen in Burmah, was sufficient to avoid unpleasant consequences; and between men of sense and masculine character, whether Burmese or British, who did not want to quarrel, it might have sufficed as an excuse for both parties to keep the peace.

The letter of the Governor-General, after announcing to His Majesty the formidable preparations that were going on, “to enforce his rights and vindicate his power”—preparations which, he added, would not be suspended in consequence of the receipt of the King’s letter, concludes with the following ultimatum:—

“ 1. Your Majesty, disavowing the acts of the present Governor of Rangoon, shall, by the hands of your Ministers, express regret that Captain Fishbourne, and the British officers who accompanied him, were exposed to insult at the hands of your servants at Rangoon, on the 6th of January last.

“ 2. In satisfaction of the claims of the two captains who suffered exactions from the late Governor of Rangoon: in compensation for the loss of property which British merchants may have suffered in the burning of that city by the acts of the present Governor; and in consideration of the expenses of preparation for war, your Majesty will agree to pay, and will pay at once, ten lacs of rupees (one hundred thousand pounds) to the Government of India.

"3. Your Majesty will direct that an accredited Agent, to be appointed in conformity with the VIIth Article of the Treaty of Vandaboo, and to reside at Rangoon, shall be received by your Majesty's servants there ; and shall, at all times, be treated with the respect due to the Representative of the British Government.

"4. Your Majesty will direct the removal of the present Governor of Rangoon, whose conduct renders it impossible that the Government of India should consent to any official intercourse with him.

"If, *without further delay, negotiation, or correspondence*, these conditions shall be consented to, and shall be fulfilled on, or before, the 1st day of April next, hostile operations shall be stayed, peace between the States shall be renewed, and the King's ship shall be restored.

"But if—untaught by former experience ; forgetful of the irresistible power of the British arms in India ; and heedless of the many additional proofs that have been given of its might, in the successful fall of the powerful Sovereigns of Bhurtpore, of Scinde, of the Sikhs, and of many other Princes, since last the Burman rulers vainly attempted to resist the British troops in war—the King of Ava shall unwisely refuse the *just and lenient conditions* which are now set before him, the British Government will have no alternative but immediate war.

"The guilt and the consequences of war will rest upon the head of the Ruler of Ava."

Let it be borne in mind that up to this moment the King had been charged with no unfriendly act towards the British Government. His former letter, and the disgrace of the Governor of Rangoon, inflicted at our instance, had elicited the approbation of the Government of India, and of the British Ministry. Nay, in the very letter before us, the following tribute is paid to the "justice and sagacity" of the King:—

"The reply which your Majesty addressed to the letter from the Government of India was in all respects worthy of a just and sagacious Ruler. It admitted the justice of the claims which had been advanced, directed the removal of the Governor of Rangoon, and promised redress by the hands of a new Governor fully armed with powers to afford it.

"That redress has not been granted by your Majesty's servant at Rangoon ; on the contrary, gross and repeated insults have since been offered by him to the British Government, in the person of its officers, and every amende has been evaded or refused." \*

Let it also be borne in mind that, in retaliation for the insult alleged to have been offered by His Majesty's servant at Rangoon, we have already carried off the royal ship, and that the above ultimatum was the reply to an inquiry from the King, as to the authority of Commodore Lambert to commit that act of violence, but to which inquiry no answer was given—bearing all this in mind, there could be but one result expected or intended from this high-handed appeal to force against the claims of reason and justice. The Governor-General's ultimatum was forwarded to Colonel Bogle at Moulmein; the same "*Tseetkays*" crossed over from Martaban to receive the despatch; they "appeared to be much grieved"\* at its purport; it was at once forwarded to the capital, but no answer was returned.

It is no part of my plan to give any account of the war which followed; respecting which some particulars will be found in the "Further papers relating to hostilities with Burmah," presented to Parliament during the present session. A war it can hardly be called. A rout, a massacre, or a visitation, would be a more appropriate term. A fleet of war-steamers and other vessels took up their position in the river, and on the 11th April, 1852, *being Easter Sunday*, they commenced operations by bombarding both the Rangoon and Dallah shores. Everything yielded like toywork beneath the terrible broadsides of our ships. The Burmese had about as fair a chance of success in contending against our steamers, rockets, detonating shells, and heavy ordnance, of which they were destitute, as one of their Pegu ponies would have had in running a race with a locomotive. Whole armies were put to the rout, with scarcely the loss of a man on our side; and fortified places, when scaled by a few sailors or marines, were found entirely abandoned. There is neither honour nor glory to be gained when a highly civilised nation arrays the powers of mechanical and chemical science against a comparatively feeble, because ignorant and barbarous people. There is small room for the

\* P. 80.

display of courage where there is little risk ; and even muscular force has not much to do with a combat, the result of which depends almost entirely on the labours and discoveries of the workshop and laboratory. There is no doubt then as to the result of the Burmese war. Our troops may suffer from the climate, the water, or provisions ; but the enemy has no power to prevent their subduing and annexing the whole or any part of the country. *But success, however complete, will not obliterate one fact respecting the origin of the war.*

God can alone know the motives of man. But, looking back upon the acts of Commodore Lambert, I must say that, had his object in visiting Rangoon been to provoke hostilities, his conduct, in first precipitating a quarrel, and then committing an act of violence certain to lead to a deadly collision, could not have been more ingeniously framed to promote that object.

It has been urged in vindication of Lord Dalhousie's part in the proceedings, that, owing to the anomalous relations which exist between the Royal Navy and the Government of India, he had no power to compel Commodore Lambert to obey his orders.\* This is true, and is illustrative of the absurdity of the double government of India. But this should have induced Lord Dalhousie in the first place to have selected another envoy. India has a navy of its own. But where was the necessity for sending a squadron at all, until after a demand for redress had been made through a civilian, or at least a Company's officer, who, like Colonel Bogle, understood the customs of the country ; and the more especially so, as it was the first complaint that had been officially presented to the Government of Burmah? Besides, it was in the power of his Lordship, after the first proofs of Commodore Lambert's rashness, to have withdrawn the instructions with which he sailed from Calcutta.

\* This subject was referred to in the House of Lords, and the "anomaly" pointed out by Lords Ellenborough and Broughton, the latter of whom stated that, before leaving the Board of Control, he had received a letter from Lord Dalhousie, expressing a hope that it would be remedied under the new Charter Act.—(See *Hansard*, March 25th, 1852.)



Instead of which, not content with silently acquiescing in the proceedings of the Commodore, he adopted and justified his acts, with the full knowledge that he thereby shared his responsibility.

But there are other and very serious aspects to this business. Commodore Lambert, whilst owing no allegiance to the Government of India, made war upon the Burmese with the Queen's ships without having had any orders from the British Admiralty to enter upon hostilities, and the question naturally arises—to what superior authority was he responsible for the discreet fulfilment of the task he had undertaken? Why, in a strictly professional sense, to nobody. Acting under no instructions from the Admiralty, and standing towards the Government of India “in the position of the commander of an allied force,”\* he was virtually irresponsible for the proper performance of the special duty which he had volunteered upon. It must be admitted that a state of things more ingeniously contrived to enable us to involve ourselves in wars, without the unpleasantness of feeling accountable for the consequences, could hardly be imagined.

But the “anomaly” does not end here. The most important point remains to be noticed. These wars, got up by a Queen's officer in the teeth of instructions to the contrary from the Governor-General of India, whose orders he is no more bound to obey than those of the Emperor of China, *are carried on at the expense of the people of India*. Hence the difficulty of rousing the attention of the English public to the subject. We have an army of twenty thousand men now in Burmah, who have seized a territory as large as England, and their proceedings have attracted less notice from the press and public of this kingdom than has the entry of a few thousand Russian troops, into the, to us, far more inaccessible Danubian Provinces. And the reason is obvious. The *bill* for the cost of the Burmese war is presented not to us, but to the unhappy ryots of Hindostan. To aggravate this injustice in the present

\* Lord Ellenborough, House of Lords, 25th March, 1852.



case, it must be remembered that the war originated in a dispute between the Governor of Rangoon and the captains of a couple of English merchant ships. What exclusive interest had the half-naked peasant of Bengal in the settlement of the claims of Captains Sheppard and Lewis, that he should alone be made to bear the expense of the war which grew out of them? And not merely the cost of the war, heavy as it will be, but the far more serious burden to be entailed upon our older possessions in India, from the permanent occupation or annexation of the whole or a large part of the Burmese Empire. To the latter evil, growing out of our insatiable love of territorial aggrandisement, we shall probably be wilfully blind, until awakened from a great national illusion by some rude shock to the fabric of our Indian finance.

It is now placed beyond a doubt, for we have it on the evidence of the East India Company themselves, that our recent acquisitions of territory in the East have been unproductive. Scinde, Sattara, and the Punjaub, which have been annexed at the cost of so many crimes, are one and all entailing a charge upon the Indian revenue. Yet these countries are, as it were, within the basin of Hindostan, and lie contiguous to our possessions. But Burmah is no *part* of Hindostan. The people are semi-Chinese; and as a proof how little intercourse we have had with them, it may be mentioned that when Lord Dalhousie wished to print some proclamations to be distributed in Pegu, it was found that there was no press in Calcutta where the Burmese character could be printed. The distance from Calcutta to Rangoon by sea is as great as from London to Hamburg; and it must be borne in mind that troops in Burmah will be entitled to extra pay for being stationed "beyond sea," which will add much to the expense of its occupation.

But I need not press this view of the subject; for it is avowed on all hands that the acquisition of territory in Burmah is not desirable; and Lord Dalhousie recorded in express terms, at the outset of the contest, his opinion that "conquest

in Burmah would be a calamity second only to the calamity of war." \* And when contemplating the possibility of being obliged to extend his military occupation even to the capital, he says that in such a contingency, "the Government of India can no longer regard its financial position with the confidence it is now warranted in entertaining," and that, instead of surplus revenue, we must in that case expect to hear of "exhausted cash balances, and re-opened loans." †

Yet it is not a little perplexing to find, in the teeth of all these solemn disavowals of a desire for seizing more territory, that the Governor-General's policy aims directly at the annexation of Pegu, and will admit of no other terms; and if "a real necessity for advance" should arise, then, in spite of its ruinous consequences, "let us," says his Lordship, "fulfil our destiny, which there, as elsewhere, will have compelled us forward in spite of our wishes:" ‡ or, in plain English, let us take the whole of Burmah, even if it should prove ruinous to our finances, because it is our destiny.

Now, if we are to have credit for the sincerity for all this, what will be said of its statesmanship? I put aside the pretence of "destiny," which is not to be tolerated as a plea amongst Christians, however valid it may be in Mahometan casuistry. But where lies the necessity for annexing any part of Burmah, if it be not our interest to do so? I find but one argument put forth, but it is repeated in a variety of forms. We are told that if we do not seize a portion of the enemy's territory we shall be disparaged in his eyes. In other words, unless the Government of India, with three hundred thousand troops, and backed by the whole power of the British empire, pursue a policy injurious to its own interests, it will suffer in the estimation of the Burmesè, who, we are told, have in the present war, "betrayed a total want of enterprise, courage, power, and resource; large bodies of them retiring at the mere sight of a steamer, or in the presence of a few Europeans as

\* Further papers, p. 44.

† Ibid. p. 87.

‡ Ibid. p. 93.

soon as they are landed.”\* Admitting, I repeat, the sincerity of this argument, what shall we say of the policy which it seeks to justify? Lord Dalhousie begins with a claim on the Burmese for less than a thousand pounds; which is followed by the additional demand of an apology from the Governor of Rangoon for the insult offered to our officers; next, his terms are raised to one hundred thousand pounds, and an apology from the King’s ministers; then follows the invasion of the Burmese territory; when, suddenly, all demands for pecuniary compensation and apologies cease, and his Lordship is willing to accept the cession of Pegu as a “compensation” and “reparation” for the past, whilst at the same time he pens long Minutes to prove how calamitous it will be to us to annex that province to our Indian empire! Conceding, I say, the *bona fides* of all this—ought not we to advertise in the *Times* for a Governor-General of India who can collect a debt of a thousand pounds without annexing a territory which will be ruinous to our finances? But the fact is, and the sooner we all know it the better, nobody gives us credit for sincerity when we protest our reluctance to acquire more territory, whilst our actions are thus falsifying all our professions.† Nor, speaking nationally, are we entitled to such credit.

Public opinion in this country has not hitherto been

\* P 65.

† That the reader may see how a policy which we declare to be unprofitable to ourselves, in a pecuniary sense, weakens our moral influence in the eyes of other nations, I give the following extract from a speech delivered by General Cass in the Senate of the United States, December, 1852.

“Another of the native Powers of Hindostan has fallen before the march of a great commercial corporation, and its 8,000,000 or 10,000,000 of people have gone to swell the immense congregation of British subjects in India. And what do you think was the cause of the war which has just ended in the swallowing up of the kingdom of Burmah? The whole history of human contests, since the dispersing of the family of man upon the plains of Shinar, exhibits no such national provocation, followed by such national punishment. Political arithmetic contains no such sum as that which drove England to this unwelcome measure. Had we not the most irrefragable evidence, we might well refuse credence to this story of real rapacity. But the fact is indisputable that England went to war with Burmah, and annihilated its political existence,

opposed to an extension of our dominion in the East. On the contrary, it is believed to be profitable to the nation, and all classes are ready to hail with approbation every fresh acquisition of territory, and to reward those conquerors who bring us home title-deeds, no matter, I fear, how obtained, to new Colonial possessions. So long as they are believed to be profitable, this spirit will prevail.

But it is not consistent with the supremacy of that moral law which mysteriously sways the fate of empires, as well as of individuals, that deeds of violence, fraud, and injustice, should be committed with permanent profit and advantage. If wrongs are perpetrated in the name, and by the authority, of this great country, by its proconsuls or naval commanders in distant quarters of the globe, it is not by throwing the flimsy veil of a "double government" over such transactions that we shall ultimately escape the penalty attaching to deeds for which we are really responsible. How, or when, the retribution will re-act upon us, I presume not to say. The rapine in Mexico and Peru was retaliated upon Spain in the ruin of her finances. In France, the *razzias* of Algeria were repaid by her own troops, in the massacres of the Boulevards, and the savage combats in the streets of Paris. Let us hope that the national conscience, which has before averted from England, by timely atonement and reparation, the punishment due for imperial crimes, will be roused ere it be too late from its lethargy, and put an end to the deeds of violence and injustice which have marked every step of our progress in India.

for the non-payment of a disputed demand of £990. So says the *London Times*, the authoritative expositor of the opinions and policy of England. 'To appreciate,' says that impersonation of British feeling, 'correctly the character of this compulsory bargain, the reader must recollect that the sum originally demanded of the Burmese for the indemnification of our injured merchants was £990, and Lord Dalhousie's terms, even when the guns of our steamers were pointed against Rangoon, comprehended, in consideration of the expenses of the expedition and of compensation for property, a claim only of £100,000.' *Well does it become such a people to preach homilies to other nations upon disinterestedness and moderation."*

WHAT NEXT—AND NEXT?

## NOTE.

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FROM the outset Mr. Cobden opposed the Russian war. The principles upon which he acted are set forth in his earliest political writings, and having once laid hold of what he believed to be a true doctrine, he allowed no consideration of self-interest or popularity to interfere with the just and faithful application of that doctrine to the existing state of public affairs. At this lapse of time it seems incredible that his resistance to a war which is now generally regarded as having been a colossal blunder, should have subjected him to so much odium and misrepresentation. The more reflecting portion of their fellow-countrymen—even those who widely differed from their views—have since admitted that no public men ever exhibited a higher degree of moral courage than did Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright during those eventful years. From the moment the first danger of hostilities arose their labours in the cause of peace were unceasing, both in and out of Parliament. Amid the storm of obloquy with which they were assailed, they stood resolute and unmoved—serene in the strength which the fulfilment of a supreme duty always imparts to the upright statesman. Mr. Cobden did not believe in war as a means of promoting the interests of commerce, or of effecting the regeneration of nations. After the Exhibition of 1851, he proposed that the profits should be devoted to the construction of an Atlantic telegraph; and a favourite sentiment of his was that “Free trade was the international law of the Almighty.”

“What next—and next?” has passed into the vocabulary of political phrases. The pamphlet itself was published in the early part of January, 1856, about the time that Austria, supported by the influence of the Emperor Napoleon, was making to the Cabinet of St. Petersburg those proposals of peace which soon after resulted in the Conference at Paris, and the termination of the Crimean war. While the destinies of Eastern Europe were still committed to the arbitrament of the battle-field, Mr. Cobden forwarded to a veteran Whig statesman a letter of Charles James Fox, which, exulting as it did at the peace of Amiens, contrasted strangely with the warlike manifestoes of the successors of that illustrious leader of the Liberal party. When peace was proclaimed in 1856, Mr. Cobden, if he had been asked the question, could well have answered in the language of Mr. Fox, whose letter, which accidentally came into his possession, he turned to such good account:—“I am very glad indeed that peace has come at last, and you are quite right in supposing that, whatever the terms may be, it is sure of my approbation.”

## WHAT NEXT—AND NEXT ?

IN the following remarks, all allusion to the original cause of the rupture with Russia has been studiously avoided, and I therefore venture to hope that the most strenuous supporters of the war, and the most ardent advocate of peace, may meet me on common ground to discuss the probabilities of the future—a question in which all parties are alike interested.

If any argument were required to show the necessity we are under of entering upon this prospective discussion, it will only be necessary to glance at the circumstances which attended the expedition to the Crimea. That that undertaking was a leap in the dark—that ministers, generals, admirals, and ambassadors, were all equally ignorant of the strength of the fortress and the numbers of the enemy they were going to encounter, is proved by the evidence before the Sebastopol Committee. We are there told that Lord Raglan could obtain no information; that Sir John Burgoyne believed that none of the authorities with the British army when it landed had any knowledge of the subject; and that Admiral Dundas could get no intelligence from the Greeks, who were hostile, and the "Turks knew nothing." Other authorities guessed the number of the Russian forces in the Crimea variously at from 30,000 to 120,000 men. In this state of ignorance, Lord Raglan, under a mild protest which threw the responsibility on the Government at home, set sail from Varna for the invasion of Russia. Yet, whilst confessedly without one fact on which to found an opinion, the most confident expectations were formed of the result. Lord Aberdeen and Mr. Sidney Herbert state that it was the general belief that Sebastopol would fall by a *coup de main*. Sir John Burgoyne was in hopes we should have taken it "at once,"

until he saw it, and then he "altered his opinion." And according to Admiral Dundas "two-thirds of the people expected to be in Sebastopol in two or three days."

We are at the end of the second year's campaign; the Allies have lost, in killed and wounded, nearly as many men as it cost Napoleon, in actual combat, to gain possession of Moscow, and still Sebastopol is not wholly in our power.

And what good grounds have we for believing that the Government, and the military and naval authorities, have better information or more wisely arranged plans for the future than they had for the past? Will it not at least be prudent to assume that what happened a year since may occur again, and to recognise the duty of every man to bring to the common stock of knowledge whatever facts or opinions he may possess, calculated to shed a ray of light upon the path of triumph or disaster along which both friends and opponents of the war must accompany our national fortunes?

Within an area of about forty miles square upon the extreme southern point of the Crimea, more than 300,000 men are waiting the return of spring, to start into life and hostile action—what will be their first operations? Assuming, as is now probable, though their motives are not very intelligible, that the Russians will not evacuate the peninsula without a further struggle, the Allies will, it may be expected, open the campaign by attacking them in their strongly entrenched position, chosen no doubt with judgment, and fortified during the winter with the utmost labour and skill. Let us assume the most favourable result—more fortunate than that predicted by the writers in the *United Service Magazine*—that, after a series of obstinate and bloody encounters, the Russians are compelled to retreat, and leave the whole of the Crimea in the hands of the Allies—

#### WHAT NEXT?

Will the Allied powers keep possession of the Crimea? If so, an army will be required to occupy it. Or, is it to be



abandoned? If so, in twelve hours the Cossack lances will be seen above the ruins of Sebastopol; and then what was the motive for taking it at so great a cost? In either case, what other operations are to be carried on? If, in addition to the retention of the Crimea, the war is to be prosecuted in Bessarabia, or on the Dnieper and the Boug, another army will be required for those operations, to supply the place of that left in the Crimea, and to fill up the vacuum occasioned by our losses in the expulsion of the Russians.

But another plan is proposed. It has been said, as soon as you have cleared the Crimea of the enemy, withdraw your army, and convert the war into a naval blockade. But will the Russian armies, no longer menaced by the Allies, remain inactive? Russia is at war with Turkey. What in that case is to prevent her from pouring reinforcements, either by the pass of Dariel, or by her great highway the Wolga, and across the Caspian, which our ships cannot reach, into Georgia, and thus indemnifying herself, as Mr. Layard has predicted she will do, for the loss of the Crimea, by fresh conquests in Asia Minor? No: the war entered into by France and England must be carried on without intermission until peace is concluded between Russia and Turkey.

We may conclude then that the further operations already indicated by the capture of Kinburn will be carried out; that after the conquest of the Crimea the Allied armies proceeded to attack Nicolaieff, and, notwithstanding the difficulties of approach, and the obstacles which the genius of Todleben may have created, I will again give them credit for greater success than is promised by the organ of the United Services, by assuming the capture of that arsenal. The war will still go on; Perekop will be invested; the forts of the Danube attacked; an army will be landed to occupy Odessa (I will not assume the infamy of a bombardment of that *entrepôt*.)—I will take for granted that all these operations are successful, and that every place within fifty miles of the Black Sea in Southern

Russia is in the hands of the Allies; an army may then be despatched to Tiflis, to drive the Russians from Georgia, and their trans-Caucasian provinces. That all these objects may be accomplished with time and commensurate efforts—efforts of which the past are but a faint example—by two such nations as France and England I have never denied; that repeated levies of men and money will be necessary for their accomplishment, no one will dispute: and having assumed all these achievements to be effected in a succession of victorious campaigns, having thus realised the wildest hopes of the most sanguine advocates of war—

### AND THEN WHAT NEXT?

“Russia must then come to terms,” will be the popular answer. What terms? We know the terms that were offered and refused by her at Vienna, but who can say what we are now fighting for? One party insists on a solid guarantee from Russia for the future, without specifying its nature; another would wrest from her Poland and Circassia; a third will be content with the Crimea; and there are others who insist on a heavy fine to prevent future acts of aggression. But it may at least be assumed that they who advocated the continuance of the war, at the close of the Vienna Conferences, will exact as hard terms after so great an additional sacrifice of blood and treasure as before. These, however, Russia rejects, on the plea that they involve an abdication of her sovereign rights in her own territory, and she declares her determination to resist the attempted humiliation to the last extremity. The question then, is, whether the Allies have the power of imposing these terms by force of arms?

There are several ways by which nations are brought to abject conditions of peace, such as the capturing or destroying their only army, the occupation of their metropolis, or the cutting off its supply of food, and the blockading of their ports. Napoleon’s favourite plan was to seize the enemy’s capital and

so paralyse the action of their Government. Thus, in breaking up his camp at Boulogne, to confront the hostile attitude of Austria, he made every manœuvre subservient to the capture of Vienna; and, in his invasion of Prussia, he fought the battle of Jena only to gain possession of Berlin. When about to invade Russia he kept the same object steadily in view. All his reported conversations are full of allusions to this ruling idea.—“I am on my way to Moscow,” said he; “two battles will do the business; the Emperor Alexander will come on his knees, and then is Russia disarmed. Moscow is the heart of their Empire. The peace we shall conclude shall carry with it its own guarantee.” And again—“We must advance on Moscow, possess ourselves of the capital, and then dictate a peace.” He was as logical as daring; for, having set before himself an object, he adapted the means to the end. Unlike the bunglers of our day, he did not move till he had all Germany for the basis of his operations, with an Austrian corps under Schwarzenberg for his right wing, and the Poles in the front ranks of his army; and when marching into Russia at the head of half a million of men, he must have felt that, if success did not crown his ambitious design, he would at least leave no excuse to inferior men to court disaster by attempting that which he, with nearly all Europe by his side, had failed to accomplish.

And if the Moscow of 1812 resembled the city of our day, it might well have seduced the imagination of Napoleon. The traveller who has visited every other metropolis in Europe is struck with surprise and admiration at the unique spectacle presented by the capital of the Czars—with its seven miles of suburb and city, interspersed with gardens and trees, its green roofs of sheet iron gleaming to the sun, the hundreds of cupolas, flashing with gold, deep blue, or green, spangled with stars, and surmounted with the Greek cross, from which hang gilt chains looped gracefully to the circumference of the cupola, and, crowning all, that picturesque cluster of palace, churches, and

monument, the Kremlin ; altogether this bright and busy place, with the crowd of Asiatic-looking people that fill its streets, carries us back in imagination to the Bagdad of a thousand years ago.

But will the conquest of the shores of the Black Sea, even to the complete extent which I have assumed, enable the Allies to impose humiliating terms of peace on the Russian Government ? In what way will it do so ? They cannot reach within four hundred miles of the old Muscovite capital, around which are grouped thirty millions of the most industrious, energetic, and patriotic population of Russia—that nucleus of the Slavonic race before whose impassive fortitude conquering Tartars, Poles, Swedes, and French have successively recoiled. They cannot surround or destroy the enemy's army, or cut off its supplies, for, in retreating before the Allies, whenever it may suit them, into the interior, the Russians will be falling back on their reinforcements and magazines ; and whilst every step will increase their security, it will add to the difficulties and dangers of their pursuers, by drawing them away from the basis of their operations, their shipping.

They cannot sensibly impair the finances of the Russian Government by cutting off the sources of its revenue, for it must be borne in mind that the territory bordering on the Black Sea comprises the poorest, the least populous, and the most uncivilised portion of European Russia.

The Isle of Wight is a more important source of revenue to England than the Crimea, has ever been to the Russian Government.

Until the repeal of the English Corn Laws, less than ten years ago, the cultivation of some of the most fertile districts of the Don and the Dnieper was almost as much neglected as were the alluvial deposits of the Tigris and Euphrates. During the last few years these regions have made a progress in development hardly surpassed by any portion of the United States, and a corresponding increase in the exports of corn and other

produce from the Black Sea and the Sea of Azoff has been witnessed. But, as I have elsewhere shown, the import trade, and consequently the Customs revenue of Russia, has been systematically impeded by her prohibitive system; and this policy has been carried out, from political or other reasons, with especial jealousy in her Southern Ports, where, with the exception of Odessa, hardly any import trade is carried on with which the allied cruisers can interfere, and where consequently there is but little Customs revenue which they can curtail.

In the face of these facts, I cannot see how the Allies can hope to coerce Russia into humiliating terms of peace by any pressure which they can bring to bear on her material and financial resources from the present scene of military and naval operations. If we turn to the shores of the Baltic, and take credit for the utmost conceivable success of the arms of the Allies—assuming Cronstadt, and every other fortification on that coast, with all the shipping they protect, to be destroyed—still this would not give us possession of her modern capital. Petersburg stands twenty miles above Cronstadt, on a shallow river. Besides its own population of half a million, it is connected by a railway with Moscow, which secures it the succour of that great centre of population and public spirit. But the fact that an army would for six months be cut off by the frost from all communication with its shipping is the great security against a maritime attack upon the capital. I need not, however discuss a scheme which has never seriously engaged the thoughts of any sane man. The example and fate of Napoleon will for ever forbid an invasion of the interior of Russia, or an attack on her capitals, so long as the empire holds together. Seeing then the impossibility of subduing her by a direct military operation, the only chance of bringing her to submission is through the destruction of her commerce, and the cutting off the sources of her revenue. The war then becomes a trial of endurance, and the question is—to what extent can Russia evade the effects of a blockade of her ports,

and how far will her moral and material forces enable her to sustain the sacrifices inflicted on her. The first point to consider is the extent of her dependence on a maritime foreign trade, and this will be best elucidated by a reference to the

#### PROTECTIONIST POLICY OF RUSSIA.

For thirty years before the appearance of our hostile cruisers on her coast, Russia had been so industriously occupied in blockading her own ports by her prohibitive tariff, as to have left less for her enemies to do in this respect than some of them may have supposed. When, nearly half a century since, Napoleon attempted to force upon Alexander, at the point of the bayonet, his "continental system," the trade of that empire was comparatively free, and its people were dependent on foreign countries, and especially England, for almost every comfort and luxury of civilised life. Travellers proceeded from this country to take orders for our manufactures in Russia, with almost as much facility as in Scotland or Ireland; and Englishmen opened their shops in Petersburg for the supply of all articles of dress and furniture on nearly as great a scale as in the streets of London. So destitute were they of manufacturing resources that even the coarse woollens required for the clothing of the Russian army were purchased in England. At that time to have cut off the Russian empire from all commerce with foreign countries would have been to doom a part of its people to nakedness. But upwards of thirty years ago, seduced by the example of England and other countries, it was resolved to "protect native industry in all its branches." A tariff was accordingly framed, imposing protective duties on foreign manufactures. At first the rates were not excessive, but being levied on weight and measure, and not on value, the consequence has been that as commodities have fallen in price, owing to cheaper raw materials, and improved processes of manufacture, the *ad valorem* duty has

proportionately increased; to such an extent has this operation been felt in some cases, that articles which once paid 30 per cent. are now, without any alteration of the tariff, subjected to a duty of from two to three hundred per cent.

No other country has suffered so much from the attempt to force a manufacturing system into artificial life as Russia—for nowhere else has it been made on so large a scale upon a community so unprepared for the experiment, and where the interests of the vast majority were so identified with agricultural pursuits. It would be difficult to say whether the injury has fallen more heavily on the government or people—the former through its loss of Customs revenue, the latter owing to the scarcity and high price of manufactures, and the misdirection of their capital and labour. It would be plunging into the tediousness of a Free Trade argument to attempt to follow this evil into all its details and ramifications. One or two illustrations will suffice. The example of cotton yarn displays the working of the protective system in all its aspects. Formerly, when the duty was moderate, there was a large importation which yielded one of the principal items of the Customs revenue. But, by the process just described, the *ad valorem* duty has constantly increased, so as gradually to operate as a prohibition on the lowest qualities, the most necessary for the consumption of the mass of the people, until at length the article contributes but an insignificant amount to the public treasury. In the meantime, beneath the hothouse of protection, a few score of spinning mills have grown to sickly maturity; but in spite of the privilege they have enjoyed, at the expense of the revenue and the consumer, they yield only a precarious return, and there is scarcely an example of a mill-owner having retired with a realised fortune. Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of peasants, who employ the long winter at the loom, are condemned to the use of a yarn nearly double its natural price, and so inferior in quality that I was informed by a weaver in a village in the interior that he could tell



whether he was working with English or Russian yarn after a few strokes of his shuttle.

Men of the highest rank in Russia are tempted by the protective tariff to devote to cotton spinning capital which would be far more usefully and profitably expended on their landed estates. A striking instance of this kind was presented to my notice at a cotton mill attached to a nobleman's chateau a few miles from Moscow. The steam engine and machinery, which were of English manufacture, embraced every latest improvement, and were performing all those miracles of mechanism which a cotton mill only can exhibit. A few steps took me from the mill into the midst of the agricultural operations on the surrounding estate, and what a contrast did the implements of husbandry present! The ploughs were on the model of those in use in the days of Cincinnatus; the scythes and reaping-hooks might have been the instruments of the ancient Scythians; the spades in the hands of the peasants were either of wood, or merely tipped with iron; and the wheels and axles of the carts, and the teeth of the harrows, were entirely made of wood. And this is in miniature the spectacle which all Russia presents of the great staple industry, agriculture, being sacrificed to the protected interests of manufactures. I will give only one other illustration, in the article of sugar. Under the stimulus of exorbitant Customs duties upon Colonial sugar, amounting to nearly cent. per cent., the beetroot has been brought extensively into use in the central provinces of Russia, and having had, up to the last few years, no excise duty to pay, for every pound yielded by the home manufacture there was just so much prevented from contributing to the revenue at the Custom House. Latterly, when nearly one third of the sugar consumed is of domestic growth, at a loss of £700,000 to the revenue, an attempt has been made to subject it to a small excise duty. And from that moment commences the struggle between the government and the protected interest, which will cease only with the



abandonment of the principle of protection. In a word, the government of Russia has emulated with such success the example of more civilised countries that, with the sole exception of France, she has the most restrictive tariff in Europe. For a long time, indeed, she surpassed all her rivals in the impolicy of her export duties, in which some reform has been effected; but not until she had fostered rivalry in all directions, and helped to raise up competition against her tallow in Australia, her hides in Buenos Ayres, and her grain in the United States.

If this were the time to pursue the argument, it might be shown that great injury has been inflicted on her manufacturing industry by the protection afforded to particular interests. Russia, like all other countries, has its natural industries, from which capital and labour have been diverted by fiscal regulations; for example, the manufacture of boots, shoes, and all articles of leather, coarse linens, sail cloth, cordage, low-priced woollens, and articles of wood, are all employments indigenous to her soil, and in which she has natural advantages over other countries. No country is more favoured in the growth of coarse wool, flax, and hemp. And the ingenuity of the people in working on their woods is quite remarkable. Now, can it be doubted that if, following the law of the division of labour, the nation had been left to its own natural occupations, these industries would have taken deeper root during the last thirty-five years than they have been enabled to do whilst capital and labour have been systematically diverted to such exotic pursuits as cotton spinning, or the manufacture of silks, stuffs, laces, fine woollens, &c. &c.?

By every test that can be applied, it will be found how much the prosperity of the empire has been retarded by the protective system. But the whole extent of the injury can never be appreciated, since it includes the unknown amount of progress which has been prevented. Free Trade would have created a dozen flourishing sea-ports like Odessa—whose

prosperity has arisen solely from its freedom—through which would have entered the wealth of Western Europe. In no other way than through these avenues of foreign trade can a new community receive the capital and civilisation which have been accumulating in the world from the earliest time. Peter the Great knew this when he welcomed with honours and rewards the captains of the first vessels that reached St. Petersburg.

I now come to the practical inference to be drawn from the above facts. The argument cannot be evaded that the creation of a dozen additional sea-ports would have presented so many more vulnerable points of attack to the Allied squadrons. It cannot be denied that the blockade of the coast of Russia loses its power of coercion in proportion as she has pursued a course of economical isolation. You cannot ruin ports which a false policy has not allowed to exist, or impoverish merchants where none have been permitted to flourish, or by intercepting cargoes of fustians condemn to nakedness a population content with sheepskins, or cut off the saccharine luxuries of a people who prefer their own insipid beet-root sugar to the more luscious product of the cane of the tropics, or by closing the navigation of the Neva deny the pleasures of the tea-table to the inhabitants of St. Petersburg, who have voluntarily chosen to bring the whole of their favourite beverage four thousand miles overland from China, to expose them to the rigours of winter by interdicting them from receiving at Cronstadt the furs which are conveyed to them after a journey of a twelve-month from their own territory in Siberia and North America. What, it will be exclaimed, has Protection all these advantages over Free Trade in time of war?

But Free Trade has its side of the picture. Had there been no protective tariffs in Russia or England during the last thirty years, and had an annual exchange of commodities grown up, as I believe would have been the case, between the two countries to the extent of (exports and imports) from forty

to fifty millions sterling, there would have been powerful interests in both countries ranged on the side of peace. The warlike energies of a Czar would have been restrained in their impulses by the consciousness that not merely his flourishing sea-ports, but every village in his empire would feel in its daily avocations the evils of a state of hostilities ; and, on the other hand, if in England, as we have been told by a Foreign Minister, the State Vessel was “drifting into war,” all hands would have been at their posts to guard her from the impending danger. How is it that whilst newspapers rail and diplomats wrangle on both sides of the Atlantic, nobody in England or America believes in the possibility of war? Simply because there is an annual interchange of from forty to fifty millions between the two countries.

But there is another aspect of the question, which, even if peace could not have been preserved, denies to Protectionist poverty any superiority over prosperous Free Trade as a defensive shield in time of war. It has been remarked by military critics that, if the Russians had possessed a line of railroad connecting Moscow with the Crimea, the invasion of that peninsula would have been too desperate an enterprise to have been entered upon, or that, if undertaken, the Allies would have been overwhelmed by the Russian reinforcements last winter. It is equally certain that, if Moscow and Petersburg had been connected by railroads with the German frontier, the blockade of the Baltic ports would have been, practically, almost inoperative. Now can it be doubted that, if a wiser economical policy had prevailed in Russia this great discovery in locomotion would have been applied to a country to which it is of all others in the world most suited—a region so level that for a thousand miles the engineer would hardly find occasion for a tunnel or embankment? Russia, like all primitive and agricultural communities, requires the capital of older countries for her development, and, by a beautiful law of diffusion, it is the interest of older nations to contribute from

their savings to the improvement of the new. But how can this be accomplished when human legislation steps in to forbid the benign process? Capital consists of articles of subsistence, of clothing, metals, hardware, earthenware, and other manufactures. If these be systematically excluded from a young country, how can it be enriched or improved by older states? Hundreds of millions of dollars have been advanced from Europe to the United States for the construction of railways, canals, and other internal improvements, not in the shape of gold and silver coin, but of manufactures, metals, and articles of consumption and even of luxury. If the present Russian tariff had been in force in America during the last thirty years, this aid could not have been contributed from the Old World to the New.

But to return to the subject of the blockade.—Assuming that the sea-ports of Russia are to be henceforth closed by our cruisers, and her foreign trade by sea, such as it is, to be effectually cut off, let us consider what facilities she possesses for evading the blockade by an overland transit; and this brings us to the subject of the

#### INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS IN RUSSIA.

There is no other country, with the exception of the United States, where the inhabitants will undertake such long journeys, by road or river, as in Russia, or face with so light a heart the difficulties of returning on foot after selling or losing their oxen or horses, or breaking up their rafts when many hundred miles from their homes. The reason is obvious in both cases; no other country presents the same wide extent of territory over which the population may travel and still find themselves at home. Groups of boatmen, carters, and others of this class are to be met with on the roads, trudging along on foot, or hanging like bees on a waggon on which they have bargained for a ride, always merry, and frequently whiling away the journey with a song. The great distances to which heavy

commodities can be moved by land carriage, and the extreme lowness of the charge, would be incredible unless all the circumstances of the cheapness of labour, the abundance of oxen and horses,\* and the facilities for free pasturage on the steppes at particular seasons were taken into account. Furnished with a bag of biscuits or flour, and a little spirits to mix with their water, the peasants will start with a load of corn or merchandise in the spring, when herbage for their cattle is readily found, and men and beasts will arrive at their destination, after a journey of several hundred miles, in nearly as good condition as when they left home. I witnessed an incident at the great fair of Nishni Novogorod, showing what can be done in an emergency by wheeled conveyances. A cavalcade of carts and horses, which had been detained and plundered by a tribe of mountaineers, arrived after performing a journey of 1,400 wersts. They had found it necessary to press forward to reach their destination before the close of the fair, and both horses and drivers had certainly a jaded appearance; but they drove into the town at a dashing pace after travelling nearly 900 miles in twenty-six days, nor did it appear to be regarded as an extraordinary feat. I ascertained the cost of carriage in this particular case, and, after converting the poods and roubles into hundredweights and pounds sterling, I confess I found it incredibly low.

Immediately upon the declaration of war the demand for land carriage for the conveyance of produce through the German and Polish provinces of Russia to the Austrian and

\* I purposely avoid encumbering these pages with lengthy statistics, but the following figures under this head are striking. Tengoborski, in his recently published volume on the "Productive Forces of Russia," sets down the number of horses in the Empire at eighteen millions, nearly seven times as many as in France or Austria, taken separately, eleven and a half times as many as Prussia, and two and a half times as many as the whole three put together. He estimates the horned cattle at twenty-five millions, being as many as are to be found altogether in France, Austria, and Prussia. England seems to be almost the only country which does not trouble itself to "take stock" of its agricultural resources.

Prussian frontiers, especially the latter, with a view to evade the blockade, attracted every cart and waggon, horse and bullock, not absolutely required for local purposes, within hundreds of miles of the main routes ; and the extent to which this sudden want was supplied furnished a proof which no other country in Europe could have afforded of its immense resources in the rude means of internal traffic. It is difficult to ascertain with anything like accuracy the extent of this improvised overland trade, the statistics of which have not been very correctly obtained by either the merchants or governments. The reasons are obvious ; the produce has taken fresh routes and thus may have failed at first to be minutely recorded ; and it has also undergone a change in the time of exportation for the purpose of profiting by the seasons most favourable for land transport, which must have rendered a comparison with former years for the present very difficult. Taking the estimates of the best informed merchants for my guide, I should be led to the conclusion that, omitting the article of grain, considerably more than half the ordinary amount of her exports find their way out of Russia, in spite of the blockade, by the overland route, and I learn that the means of transportation are constantly on the increase. It must be borne in mind that for this diminished supply of Russian commodities higher rates are paid by the foreign consumer, which increase of prices pass into the pocket of the Russian carrier. But it should also be remembered that the imports into Russia pass along the same route, and that the increased cost of such articles as cotton, wool, and raw sugar must be paid by the Russian consumer. As respects the article of grain, the Russian Government has lately prohibited its export, and since the movements of the armies to the south the demand for the government must in a great measure have compensated the growers of that region for the loss of the foreign market. Without pretending to statistical accuracy, or wishing to do more than suggest grounds for reflection and

discussion, I will only add another broad fact or two, and then leave the reader to draw his own conclusions as to the extent to which our blockade is likely to coerce the Russians into what they choose to consider degrading terms of peace.

It is stated by M. Tengoborski that the exports and imports of the empire do not together amount to one-sixth of the returns of the home trade, which he puts down at two hundred millions sterling. Following his data, taking the exports at fifteen millions, deducting two millions for the Asiatic trade, which our blockade does not touch, and assuming that half the remainder is intercepted, it gives six and a half millions as the amount of exports cut off by the blockade, and of this one half might be again deducted as being grain, the exportation of which is interdicted by the Russian Government. To appreciate the effect of this upon the enemy it must be remembered that it is borne by sixty millions of people, the gross amount of whose agricultural productions is estimated by the above authority at 340 millions sterling.

One word upon a point arising out of this question. It has been alleged as a grievance against Prussia, that she permits this overland trade to pass through her territory. But we know that her Baltic ports have always been *entrepôts* for a considerable trade between Russia and foreign countries. Half a century ago the whole of the foreign commerce of those Polish provinces which has lately found an outlet by the Black Sea, passed through Danzig, Königsberg, and Memel, and to this day Danzig has a large share of the commerce of the kingdom of Poland, for which the Bug and other tributaries of the Vistula are the natural channels. That sedate peers and members of Parliament should be found gravely advocating the interference of the British Government with the transit trade of Prussia is a sad illustration of the visionary reliances and schemes which have characterised the origin and conduct of this war.

There is still another way in which the internal communi-



cations of the country tend to mitigate the pressure of a naval blockade. It has been for some time the policy of the government of Russia to favour the extension of her overland trade with Asia at the expense of her maritime foreign commerce. The late Czar, although in his youth a pupil of Storch, evinced his contempt for political economy by imposing bounties and prohibitions for the encouragement of the Asiatic trade and the injury of its rivals. The great focus of this traffic for a month in every year is at Nishni Novogorod. It is difficult to form a correct estimate of the extent of the internal and overland foreign trade of Russia without paying a visit to this renowned fair. To be sure, piles of merchandise, however huge or costly, offer but a disappointing spectacle to the traveller, but nothing can surpass in interest and novelty the living assembly which is here grouped as in a picture under his eye. Standing on a terrace-like eminence which overhangs the town the spectator looks down upon an angle formed by the junction of the rivers Wolga and Oka, and sees a countless concourse of traders from all parts of the East busily buying and selling, crowding and jostling amongst the infinite variety of goods heaped up in rows many miles in length or streaming like ants to and fro upon the wooden bridges thrown across the rivers. In the suburbs of the town are seen vast clusters of carts and waggons, which, with forty or fifty thousand horses, await their return loads, whilst as far as the eye can reach the rivers are covered with boats and barges of every conceivable size and shape. The town, with its bright oriental cupolas, lies at his feet, and beyond all, bounded by the horizon, is the plain over which the Wolga slowly winds its way to the Caspian. Such is the unique spectacle which for more than a month every year this otherwise quiet little town presents to the eye of the visitor. I was informed that the total value of the goods in the fair in 1847, the year of my visit, was about sixty millions of silver roubles, or upwards of ten millions sterling. The following were the principal items, which I give less for



their statistical value than as a means of estimating the relative importance of the different commodities brought to the fair:—

						Silver Roubles (in round (figures six to the £ sterling.
Cotton Goods	.	.	.	.	.	10,000,000
Woollen ditto	.	.	.	.	.	6,000,000
Linen	.	.	.	.	.	1,500,000
Silk	.	.	.	.	.	5,000,000
Furs	.	.	.	.	.	3,000,000
Skins	.	.	.	.	.	1,000,000
Metals	.	.	.	.	.	9,000,000
Glass and Hardware	.	.	.	.	.	600,000
Grain	.	.	.	.	.	1,500,000
Tea	.	.	.	.	.	6,000,000
&c.			&c.			&c.

If, casting our eye over this list, we ask to what extent the raw materials of the above commodities are furnished from the interior or overland trade of the country—a most important question in its bearings upon our present inquiry—it will be found that, with the exception of the silks and cottons, and of them only in part, the supply of every one of these articles is independent of the maritime trade of the empire. Nearly two-thirds of the raw silk consumed in Russia is brought from Georgia and Persia, overland, there being a small differential import duty in its favour. Upon this article, however, where the cost of transport forms so insignificant an item in its value, the blockade will be found practically inoperative, since the entire quantity required will no doubt find its way by land carriage, with little inconvenience, over the German frontier. Even the cotton manufacture, although it will have to support the great weight of injury inflicted by the blockade, is not wholly dependent on the sea-borne raw material; for I saw a caravan of cotton wool arrive at the fair from Bokhara, and was witness to orders being given by Russian calico printers, for the supply of madder and other dyes, to merchants from the territory of the Khan of Khiva. As an illustration of the

manner in which the Russian Government has fostered the Asiatic trade, to the discouragement of the maritime commerce, and as an example of the operation of this policy in mitigating the effect of a naval blockade, I will point to two articles forming large items in the above list. Tea and furs are great essentials to the indoor and outdoor comfort of Russian life, where everybody has a taste for the one, and wears the other; and if it were possible to stop the supply of either, it would be felt as a cruel and almost unendurable privation. But the importation of these articles by sea is prohibited by the Russian tariff, and, as I have before stated, they are brought overland from China, Siberia, and even North America. It will be seen that the tea at the fair alone amounted to six millions of roubles or a million sterling, all brought overland from Kiachta, a distance of nearly four thousand miles. Instead of interfering with the supply of this article, the war has probably opened a fresh door for its importation; for I observe a large and sudden increase of our exports of tea to the Continent, some of which, I suspect, is smuggled into Russia, along with the mass of bulky merchandise passing over her German frontier.

It would be an error, however, to say that the overland trade with Asia is altogether the forced and unnatural product of protection and prohibition. That the current of traffic should follow the course of the great river navigation, extending from Petersburg to Siberia, is natural; and if, instead of attempting to give it an artificial stimulus by fiscal regulations, the government had devoted more attention to the removal of sand banks and other obstructions, which render many of the rivers unnavigable in the late summer and autumn months—an evil increasing with the clearing of the forests and draining of the land—there can be little doubt that this trade would have been more important than it now is. The Wolga, unrivalled in volume among European rivers, watering more than 2,000 miles of the Russian Empire, and passing through its most populous and industrious districts, is nature's own highway for

the conveyance of its products to the countries which border the Caspian Sea, from whence caravans convey the coarse woollens and other manufactures of Russia to the population of Khiva, Bokhara, and other tribes of Western Asia. And even in the far more remote regions of Thibet and Central Asia, as we learn from the pages of that most pleasant and enterprising of modern travellers, Huc, are found occasional traces of Russian intercourse, in the articles of manufacture in use among the people of those almost inaccessible countries.

I have said sufficient to direct attention to the existence of a foreign trade which does not pass seaward at all; or, if so, through an inland sea to which our ships have no access; and which follows the course of rivers to the banks of which we cannot approach within hundreds of miles. To ignore these facts, or deny their importance, as showing the extent to which the Russians can baffle us in our attempt to coerce them by a naval blockade, were as foolish as to shut our eyes to an obstacle in our path which we are bound to surmount, and which we may surely more easily get over in the light of day than in darkness.

It will not be necessary to do more than allude to the fact, so generally known, that the maritime commerce of Russia was carried on almost exclusively in foreign bottoms, and that there is, therefore, no shipping interest in that country to be affected by our blockade.

But of more immediate moment is the question, how far the Russian Government will be able, by the employment of the land transport of the country, to convey food and stores to the armies now assembling in such great force in the southern provinces of the empire. The great movement of this land carriage has for several years been in the direction of Odessa, and other ports of the Black Sea and Sea of Azoff. All the grain brought from the interior to Odessa (excluding the portion which reaches it coastwise) is conveyed overland, that great commercial *entrepôt* being characterised by the singular anomaly

of not standing upon a navigable river. A large part of its exports comes from the southern provinces of Russian Poland. Hundreds of bullock waggons and other vehicles arrive, during the busy season, in a single day at Odessa, in the outskirts of which town, as well as of Taganrog and other places, many thousands of these empty carriages may be seen awaiting their return home. Now, as the blockade of the Russian ports puts an end to the demand for this land carriage on merchants' account, it has placed these carts and waggons at the disposal of the Government, which has employed them for the transport of supplies for the army.

And here let me be allowed to express my amazement at the confident terms in which high authorities, here, and in France (in France the very highest), spoke, during the summer and autumn, of the inability of the Russians to supply food for their army in the Crimea. A few hours after the news reached this country of our successful, but inglorious, operations among the granaries, barges, and fishing nets of the Sea of Azoff, and when a cry of exultation was raised at the certain prospect of starving the enemy from his stronghold, I incurred some odium by declaring, in my place in Parliament, that these devastations would have no influence whatever on the fate of the Russian armies. On that occasion a military critic, who writes under the singular *nom de plume* of "A Hertfordshire Incumbent," and who lays claim to a minute knowledge of the topography and resources of Southern Russia, designated me a "political gamester" for hazarding so bold an assertion; and Mr. Danby Seymour, in the preface to his useful volume, published at that time, expressed also, but in more courteous terms, his dissent from my views. These gentlemen have, I doubt not, travelled longer and further in Russia than myself. My only advantage has been that I had possibly an eye and ear more open to the commercial movements, and the economical resources of the country.

In the case in question, it was forgotten that the Crimea

itself is nearly as large as Sicily ; that, before the war, Eupatoria was a port of export for corn ; that the peninsula swarms with cattle and sheep, and is the home of the horse ; that the harvest was just gathered in, and that every eminence commanded views of abundant stores of corn and hay ; that it required the utmost vigilance of the Cossack patrols to prevent the Tartars from supplying the Allies with fresh provisions ; and that the Russians commanded the two roads and the steppe (which at particular seasons is the best of roads) leading to the granary of the empire. That, in the face of facts like these, well-informed persons should have persuaded themselves that an army having the exclusive range of the interior would be allowed to want subsistence, is an example of the manner in which men can bend their judgments to their wishes, and conspire as it were to impose on their own credulity, in spite of the most convincing proofs that can be offered to their understanding.

Let us hope that with a more accurate knowledge of the resources of the enemy, and his means of transport, we shall put an end to that indiscriminate devastation of his coasts upon which we have relied for the success of our arms. To burn the food, destroy the forage, and sack the farm-houses which have the misfortune to lie within reach of our crews, may ruin individuals—often foreigners, and but rarely of the Russian race—may give to the war a character which we had flattered ourselves had passed away with the piracies of the Norsemen and the Buccaneers ; but such exploits as these, though they may cast a stigma on our naval fame, and chill the sympathies of the civilised world, will not have the remotest influence on the fate of the war. The Russian armies do not subsist upon food grown near the sea coast, or the mouths of their great rivers. They have in their rear the most fertile country in the world, where the granaries of the cultivators are encumbered with grain, rendered almost valueless by our blockade. This corn, if conveyed by river, is brought only to such points of the

navigation as are safe from attack, whence it is despatched to the armies by that facility of land carriage which I have described : if by land, there are two seasons favourable to its transport, the late spring and mid-winter ; but the latter, affording no pasturage for the draught cattle, is not generally preferred for the conveyance of bulky produce, such as corn, for long distances. It is, however, the season when heavy materials are transported on sledges for short journeys, such as from a point where one river navigation ends to that where another begins, and in cases where expedition, and not cheapness, is the object. The Government will avail itself of all these modes of conveyance, and so long as the communications are kept open with the interior, all the powers of the earth cannot prevent the Russian armies from being fed. I do not think there could be found a spot between the Carpathians and the Don, where if wood, water, and the other requisites of a camp were at hand, the Government could not furnish provisions for an army of 100,000 men.

But, in describing the methods to which the Russians may resort to evade the pressure of the blockade, or to meet the wants of the army, I would not be supposed to lose sight of the sacrifices and sufferings inseparable from a state of war. Mitigate the evil as best we may, there will still be a residuum of misery which every nation plunged in deadly hostilities with a powerful enemy will be compelled to endure. Forced levies of men and money, the suspension of some branches of industry, the derangement of others, the pall of mourning and sorrow suspended over the land—these are the dread accompaniments of war, from one or more of which no part of Russia is exempt. In estimating, however, the difficulties of our task, when undertaking to subdue such an empire to our will, it is necessary not only to ascertain the extent of suffering or privation we can inflict on its population, but also the amount of moral force we evoke to sustain them in its endurance. The two most powerful and abiding of human motives—those which

have extorted from nations the greatest voluntary sacrifices, and won for communities as well as individuals the crown of martyrdom—are the religion and patriotism of a people. Let us inquire whether, in its resistance to the demands of the Allies, the Government of Russia can hope, by appealing to these sentiments, to rouse and sustain the enthusiasm of the population in favour of the war. And first of their

#### PATRIOTISM AND LOVE OF COUNTRY.

The patriotic sentiment in Russia is not, as in France or England, associated with a consciousness of superiority in arts, arms, and civilisation; or, as in the United States, with the triumph of their political institutions; but, like the patriotism of the ancient Jews, it is blended with a spiritual pride, founded on the belief that Russia is the favoured depository of the orthodox religious faith. So strong is this feeling—perhaps all the stronger since it flatters the self-love of the people—that it surpasses even the sentiment of loyalty to the head of the State, identified though he be with the Church itself. This is illustrated by the custom of prefixing to the name of Russia, in their songs and public ceremonies, the word which is variously rendered from the Russ as “sacred” or “holy.” I have been present in Russia at a great public banquet, where the health of the Czar was drunk with enthusiasm, but when the succeeding toast of “prosperity to holy Russia” was given, it was received with reiterated cheering.

This attachment to country is not, however, exclusively founded on a religious sentiment. The Russian possesses in an eminent degree the organ to which phrenologists have given the name of “inhabitiveness.” He is passionately wedded to his village home, and Russia has been described as a great village. Nay more, this people, whom Western Europe regards with terror as a horde of imprisoned barbarians, dissatisfied with their fate, and eager to escape from their rigorous climate and ungrateful soil, to pour the tide of conquest over



more favoured and civilised regions, are, beyond any others, proud of their own country: they love its winter as well as summer life, and would not willingly exchange it for any other land. This characteristic of the Russian people is referred to by Custine, who gives us some specimens of letters, written by Russian servants travelling with their masters in Western Europe, to their friends at home, in which they complain of the humidity of the winter season, and long for the day when they shall inhale again the invigorating air of their own country, and glide over its plains of dry and hardened snow.

There is no greater delusion in the world than that which attributes to the Russian people a desire to overrun and occupy, in the spirit of the ancient Goths and Huns, any part of Western Europe. In discussing this subject with an intelligent native at Moscow, he wound up an argument to prove that the Russian people would not exchange their country for any other in the world, with this remark, "Should some new *el Dorado* be discovered, to which all the population of the earth could be invited to migrate, there would be fewer volunteers found to abandon their homes in Russia than in any other part of Europe."

With the exception of the disposition to encroach upon neighbouring Mahometan countries, to which I have elsewhere alluded, the people feel no interest in foreign politics, and the intervention of the Government in the affairs of Europe excites no sympathy in Russia. On the contrary, I found among the "old Russian party" at Moscow a spirit of hostility to the incessant interference of the late Czar in the politics of the West. In fact, the foreign policy of the last reign was very much the offspring of the personal character of Nicholas, whose almost preternatural activity of mind and body expended its surplus energies on the affairs of other countries, after having interfered with the management of everything, great and small, at home. If a bridge was to be erected at St. Petersburg or Kieff, he decided upon the plan; if a railroad was to be made



from the capital to Moscow, he drew a straight line on the map, regardless of the wants of intermediate places, or the obstacles of the country through which it had to pass ; not a church could be erected, but he must decide the form of the cupola. He was at once Pope, Commander-in-chief, President of the Board of Trade, and Secretary of State for both Foreign Affairs and the Interior. In fine, he affected to direct everything, from the manœuvring of an army to the marshalling the company at an imperial christening. Those who pretend to have known him best say that, in his interference with the affairs of other countries, he did not seek aggrandisement of territory, so much as to make himself felt as the regulating power of Europe, to which task he was constantly invited by princely and diplomatic flatterers, some of whom afterwards affected to be greatly alarmed at his encroaching tendencies. I do not presume to know his objects, but I believe they excited little interest in his people. The invasion of Hungary was not popular with any class or party. It was the act of Nicholas against the advice of the most influential men in his empire ; and, had their opposition been aided by one word of remonstrance from our Government, when the Russians made their first tentative movement across the Turkish territory into Transylvania, there is no doubt in the minds of those most competent to judge, that that great outrage, pregnant as I believe with future evil, would not have been consummated by the larger invasion which succeeded it.

There is another characteristic of the Russian people, so diametrically opposed to the opinion entertained of them, at present, in this country, that I should hesitate, as Sterne says, to “risk my credit by telling so improbable a truth,” if I could not bring pretty strong evidence to my aid. The Russians are, perhaps, naturally the least warlike people in the world. All their tastes and propensities are of an opposite character. Even in their amusements there is an absence of rudeness and violence, and they take no pleasure in the brutal sports to be

found elsewhere. They delight in music, dancing, and flowers. I was told by an American, having the control of nearly 2,000 workmen, chiefly serfs, in a large establishment connected with the Moscow Railway, that such an occurrence as a quarrel or collision amongst them never happened. Direct capital punishment was *professedly* abolished nearly a century ago in deference to the genius of the people, which abhors the shedding of human blood. I have often found myself stopping to observe, in the streets of St. Petersburg and Moscow, some amusing displays of this tenderness for life and limb on the part of the droschky drivers, who scream and gesticulate at the foot passengers approaching their vehicles with an energy that shows them to be far more terrified at the idea of the injury they may inflict than others are at the danger of being run over. But I will quote a passage on this subject from one whose views on the Eastern Question do not generally accord with my own. "The most singular thing is," says Mr. Danby Seymour, in his volume on Russia and the Black Sea, "that the people among whom this military organisation of the whole nation prevails is, without exception, the most pacific people on the face of the earth, and upon this point I believe no difference of opinion exists among all observers. Having lived for several years in a position which enabled me to mix much with the officers and men of the Russian army, such is my strong conviction of the Russian character. Mr. Haxthausen mentions, as a point admitting of no doubt, 'the absence of all warlike tendency among the Russian people, and their excessive fear of the profession of a soldier.' The Russian people have no pleasure in wearing arms like the Turk or the Pole; even in their quarrels among themselves, which are rare, they hardly ever fight, and the duel which now often takes place among Russian officers is contrary to the national manners, and a custom imported from the West. The people take no pleasure in the fighting of beasts or birds, as in bull-fights, ram-fights, or cock-fights, which are common amuse-

ments among some Eastern as well as most European nations ; and when the Russian is drunk, which often happens, he is never quarrelsome, but on the contrary caressing and given to tears. But, on being roused, he exhibits a degree of patient endurance which is astonishing, and which is very deeply seated in the national character."

The question arises, is there anything in the present war peculiarly calculated to draw forth that latent enthusiasm of the Russian character referred to at the close of the above quotation? It must be admitted that nothing is so likely to rouse the energies of a patriotic people as the invasion of their soil. The mere threat of landing in England arrayed every man against Napoleon, extinguished all our domestic feuds, and converted the whole male population into soldiers, thus furnishing the recruits for those armies which afterwards enabled Wellington to perform so great a part in the war with France. We all know the effect produced upon the Russian people by the invasion of 1812 ; when, although they were beaten in every engagement, not one voice was raised for peace or negotiation ; but the whole population, after consigning their most venerated cities to the flames, disappeared so completely at the approach of the invaders as to draw from an eye-witness the remark that Napoleon could not have bribed, with all he possessed, one pure blooded Russian peasant to voluntarily clean his boots or stable his horse.

It has been argued that the Crimea, being a recent acquisition, its invasion will not be resisted with so much obstinacy as was that of the older portions of the empire. But there are reasons why both the nobles and people may be as little inclined to loose their hold on this peninsula as any other part of "holy Russia." It is associated in a twofold manner with the religious feelings of the country ; for, as Prince Gortschakoff took care to tell the army in his last bulletin, it is the spot where Vlademir, the first Christian sovereign of Russia, received baptism, whose abandonment of paganism was the

signal for the conversion of all his subjects. It is, moreover, a province wrested from Mohammedanism, and territory won from the infidel has a precious value in the eyes of the orthodox. But there are motives of a different kind, associated with the selfish instincts of the higher classes, which are likely to provoke a stubborn resistance to the arms of the invaders. I do not allude merely to the attractions of a southern clime, though it may be well to bear in mind that the Crimea is the Isle of Wight of Russia, to which the nobility resort in the summer months, and where some of the wealthiest and most influential of their order possess elegant residences and valuable estates. But the conquest of provinces peopled by a less civilised race, as in the Crimea, enriches in a special manner the dominant class in Russia, by conferring on it not only territorial aggrandisement, but exclusive power and patronage in the administration of their affairs. The annexation of countries inhabited by a more advanced population, such as the German provinces of the Baltic, far from affording a field of preferment to the Slavonic conquerors, reacts upon them in an opposite manner, by supplying a body of administrators whose superior education enables them to compete successfully with the dominant race for public employment throughout the whole empire. It is in this way that Germany has, during the last half century, invaded Russia with her functionaries, until at length a spirit of jealousy has grown up in the Slavonic mind, claiming for the native race a larger share in the Government patronage. These observations apply, indeed, to all kinds of employments, public or private, and to the humblest as well as the highest. Enter Riga, or Revel, for example, and you will find the Russian part of the population occupying the lowest quarter of the town, and performing all the menial offices to the Teutonic merchant or shopkeeper; but a visitor to Eupatoria or Simpheropol, before the Anglo-French invasion, would have found the Russians, however humble in rank, always taking the lead of the Tartar population.

It follows, if my data be correct, upon which every one will form his own opinion, that the Russians will resist the attacks of the Allies on their southern territory with as much tenacity as they would an encroachment on their western frontier. I am bound to add my belief that they would be more likely to abandon Esthonia or Finland, improbable as that may be, than agree to a peace which should leave any part of their territory on the Black Sea at the disposal or in the possession of the Allied Powers. And it may be doubted whether any plan could have been devised more calculated to afford to the Government the opportunity of appealing at once to the patriotism of the people and the selfish instincts of the nobility than that of invading and holding in occupation any part of the territory of southern Russia.

“To defend our country is to defend our religion,” says Sir Walter Scott in speaking of the patriotic resistance to Napoleon’s threatened invasion of this country. Let us see whether we are likely to encounter a similar impediment in the

#### RELIGIOUS FEELING IN RUSSIA.

The state of religion in Russia carries us back for a parallel to our own middle ages. There is no other part of the world where a Peter the Hermit or a Thomas à Becket could hope to find a field for successful agitation, for in Russia alone the entire mass of the male population is still religious. It is the only Christian country I have visited where two-thirds of the congregations in their temples of worship, even in large cities, consist of *men*. The nation is in the fervour of church-building similar to that which endowed England with such noble ecclesiastical monuments four or five centuries ago. A not insignificant portion of the national industry is employed in making silver and gilt ornaments, casting statues and columns, moulding and burnishing domes and cupolas, or carving marbles for the erection and embellishment of cathedrals and churches, and the most gorgeous products of the loom are destined for the

hangings of the altars or the cloth of gold vestments of the priests.

It will be said that this is not religion, but superstition. Leaving to the pen of Pascal to define the difference between the two, it is enough to know that it supplies the great, and, indeed, almost the only, motive power of public opinion, and serves as a bond of union between the people and Government, enabling the latter to wield the whole strength of the empire whenever it can appeal to the fanaticism of the population. The Czar, as pontiff and secular ruler, concentrates in his person the moral and material forces of the empire. There is, however, a great abatement of the gross personal worship with which he has been treated. A very old inhabitant of St. Petersburg related to me that in his youth the common people went down on their knees and crossed themselves at the approach of the Czar, but that he had lived to see a great change when even the majestic figure of Nicholas failed to command a greater homage than a respectful obeisance and the sign of the cross, and that many omitted the latter mark of veneration.

It must be admitted that the Greek Church has shown less intolerance—not a difficult achievement—than other dominant sects, and this is probably one of the secrets of the success with which the Russian Government has held together the heterogeneous religious elements of which its empire is constituted. And who can tell but that if the Poles when they conquered Muscovy had extended a similar toleration to the subjected Greek Church they might have retained their ascendancy to this day? This toleration has, however, certain limits not uncommon on the continent, but not very consonant with our notions of religious liberty. No proselytising is allowed. Each man's creed is stereotyped from his birth. If there be any relaxation in this rule it is in favour of the Establishment, which sometimes receives converts to the privileged folds, and, on the other hand, deals most severely

with deserters from its own pale. The followers of Mahomet *living within the Russian dominions* are safe from molestation, and enjoy complete liberty of conscience. In some instances places of worship have been erected for them at the expense of Government. At Nishni-Novogorod I found a mosque flanked by two Christian churches built by the State for the accommodation of visitors to the Fair. I was conducted by the Mollah, an intelligent good-tempered man, through this building, where, upon the green cloth that covered the floor, sat, cross-legged, with their shoes beside them, Tartars, Persians, Khivites, and Bokharians. And let me recount a pleasant rebuke I received from my guide, who, on my commenting on the utter want of decoration displayed in the plain whitewashed walls of his temple, without fixture or furniture of any kind, with the exception of a small pulpit, replied with quiet earnestness, "Why should we have ornament here? God wants only the heart." But we should greatly err in supposing that this feeling of toleration towards Mahometans extends to nations bordering on the Russian Empire, and more especially to the Turks.

And, to prevent misapprehension, let it be understood that, in remarking, as I have done, upon the absence of all desire on the part of the Russian people to interfere in the affairs of Western Europe, I draw a broad line of distinction between the states of Christendom and the countries over which the conquering hosts of the Crescent still hold sway. There can be no doubt that the Russian people have been brought to the belief that it is their mission to regain for their religion the ascendancy over those neighbouring countries, at present subjected to Mussulman rule, which were formerly under a Christian Government, and where a large portion of the population are still Christians. That the nobility may be also actuated by the lust of conquest—that, coveting the fair regions now rendered sterile, in spite of the most genial climate, by Turkish sloth and barbarism, they may have indulged in dreams of spoliation, and



a new field of enterprise and glory, I can readily believe. But the masses in Russia have no such secular objects in view : they are incapable of understanding any question of foreign policy unless it be presented to them as a religious duty, and they cannot be moved through any other impulse ; and the question which concerns us is—whether, among the moral forces arrayed against us in the present war, we shall have to encounter the strongest and most enduring of all motives, the religious sentiment of the people.

All who have seen the proclamations of the Russian Government to the people, the bulletins of the commanders to the army, and the addresses of the dignitaries of the Church—to say nothing of the parading of saintly images and relics—must have observed the constant assumption that the country was engaged in a religious war. It may be objected that these appeals have been hypocritical, or even blasphemous ; and, looking to the quarters from whence some of them emanated, I am afraid the charge is not unfounded. But where shall we find in Europe a Government too scrupulous to traffic with the religious feelings of a nation ? The question, however, is not as to the sincerity and honesty of the governing class in Russia, for which I should hesitate to vouch, but whether the great mass of the people, who are never hypocritical, will be induced to endure the sacrifices of life and fortune which must attend a protracted struggle, from the belief that they are engaged in a religious war. We, in England, are certainly not in a position to deny the religious character of the origin of the war, without implying some insincerity in high places ; for we read, on the title-page of the ponderous Blue Books upon the Eastern Question presented to Parliament—“ *Correspondence respecting the Rights and Privileges of the Latin and Greek Churches in Turkey.* ” And I suspect that, with one at least of the western nations engaged in the contest, the *animus*, both in its origin and progress, partook much more of the religious element than many honest unsuspecting people suppose. Be this, however, as it may, I do



not think the evidence leaves room to doubt that the Russian people are persuaded that they are engaged in a struggle for the Greek faith, against their old foes the followers of Mahomet, and their allies.

They know nothing of the subtleties of diplomacy ; they have never heard of the Four Points ; they are ignorant alike of history and geography ; but tradition tells them of the long and fierce struggle which their forefathers sustained in throwing off the Tartar yoke, and of their incessant wars with the Ottoman Porte, in which they were not always the aggressors. They see around them the traces of an ancient Mahometan domination, and are reminded, by the cross which surmounts the crescent above the cupolas of their churches, of the final triumph of their arms over the enemies of their faith. They also know, for their priests have taken care to tell them, that the Turk still sits enthroned at Constantinople, where the shrine of St. Sophia, the very cradle of their faith, is defiled by the rites of Islamism. They are told, too, that in the fairest regions of Europe, once the patrimony of the Greek Church, millions of Christians, who are groaning under Turkish despotism, look to them for succour, and pray for the success of their arms. If any thing be wanting to confirm them in the belief that they are engaged in a war against Mahometanism, it is afforded by the policy of the Allies in placing bodies of Turks at Yenikale, and Kertch, and by the attempt upon Georgia, by Omar Pasha. These demonstrations will be made use of for persuading the Russian people that the object of the Allies is to recover for Mahometanism its lost dominion. The war will thus be made to assume more directly the character of a struggle between the Crescent and the Cross, and the serf, though passionately attached to the place of his birth, and dreading the conscription more than anything on this side the grave, will suffer himself to be taken from his village home with less reluctance than he would feel in any other cause, and he will resign himself to his fate in the honest belief that he is fighting the battle of Christianity.

Having thus glanced at the extent of the coercion we can apply to the population of Russia, the means at their disposal for evading our power, and the moral forces which will be roused into action to sustain them under the injuries we may inflict, it only remains to consider whether, through the operations of any other and more direct cause, the Russian Government may find itself compelled to submit to our terms ; and this brings us naturally to a few observations on the

#### FINANCES OF RUSSIA.

Such a thing as a printed budget, in our sense of the word, giving to the public the details of the income and expenditure of the Russian Government, no human eye ever yet beheld. This fact shows with what readiness men will part with their money, if a borrower will only assume a sufficiently lofty and imperious claim to their confidence. Before an individual will invest his savings in a public company, he takes care to know the characters of the directors, and stipulates for annual or half-yearly accounts. But here is a Government which does not condescend to tell us the amount of its income or expenditure, and yet, up to the breaking out of the war, it could obtain money on as good terms in the London market as the Directors of the Brighton Railway Company. At the same time, this Government was accused of making the worst possible use of the borrowed money, by maintaining enormous and menacing armaments in time of peace, by plotting against the liberties of Western Europe, and by the employment of spies and agents to frustrate the workings of good government everywhere. Verily, if these accusations were true, the capitalists who advanced funds to the Russian Government were base enough to furnish the means for their corruption and enslavement.

A few years ago it was the fashion to exaggerate the wealth of the Czar. A very simple and natural operation of the Bank of St. Petersburg in 1847, in investing a couple of millions

sterling in the Funds of Western Europe, at the time of the sudden and enormous demand for corn from that country, owing to the Irish famine, was trumpeted to the world as an evidence of the overflowing wealth of the Russian Government. Then followed the reports that the Czar was a subscriber for £2,000,000 to the Austrian loan; that he had advanced £500,000 to the Pope, and £250,000 to the Grand Duke of Tuscany. I took more than one public opportunity of doing my best to throw discredit on these golden illusions, by pointing to the fact that the Russian Government was a constant borrower, which was inconsistent with its being so largely a lender; and as its assumed wealth, coupled with its extensive command of soldiers, was held up as a terror to the rest of Europe, I drew attention to the fact that Russia had never been able to march an army across her frontier, to carry on war with a foreign country, without being obliged to apply to the capitalists of Western Europe for a loan. Thus, in 1829, before the close of her first campaign against the Turks, she was in treaty with the house of Hope and Co., of Amsterdam, for a loan, with the proceeds of which her generals next year fought and bribed their way almost to the gates of Constantinople. Two years later, her armies were put in motion against the Poles by means of funds derived from the same source. In both cases it was the money of Dutch, English, French, and German capitalists that sustained the strength and nerved the arms of the Russian soldiers in these devastating campaigns. And again, in 1849, on the occasion of the invasion of Hungary, there not being money enough in the treasury to move the army across the frontier, the floating debt was increased by upwards of three millions sterling, the ukase which announced this issue of treasury bonds declaring it was to meet the expenses of the Hungarian war. And, in less than six months afterwards, the Czar was under the necessity of borrowing in London and Amsterdam five millions sterling, under the pretence of constructing a railroad, but really to

cover the expenses of this war. In fact, an annual expenditure exceeding the income being the normal state of the finances of Russia, whenever an extraordinary exigency arises, calling for a payment beyond her own frontiers, she is obliged to have recourse to the capitalists of Western Europe.

I recur to these past incidents for no other purpose than to secure a perfect understanding between the reader, whom I will take the liberty of supposing to be an advocate of the war as it has been carried on by the invasion of the Russian territory, and myself, whose relative situation in the controversy is completely reversed by that act. For more than twenty years that I have taken a part in the discussions upon the dangers apprehended from Russian ambition, I have endeavoured, however unsuccessfully, to show the groundlessness of the public alarms, *owing to the poverty of that Government, and its inability to set in motion great bodies of men for a distant enterprise.* Every argument I have used has been in opposition to those who presented to us the spectacle of Russian *aggression* as the evidence of danger to this country. But from the moment that we landed an army upon the soil of that empire—which again and again I have denounced in Parliament as the rashest act in our history—I have myself become the alarmist, *and I confess to have felt far more concern and surprise at the disposition to underrate the power of Russia to defend her own territory, than I ever did at the comparatively harmless exaggeration of her resources for an aggressive war.* By assailing her at home, three thousand miles from our own shores, we have not only abandoned every security which that vast distance afforded us against her hostile designs, but we have given her enormous advantages, of different kinds, in the struggle, which in no other way she could have enjoyed, and in nothing will this be more apparent than in examining into the effects of the war upon the financial resources of Russia.

In the autumn of last year, a controversy arose between

the late M. Leon Faucher, the eminent French economist, who had published some disparaging statements upon the Russian finances in the *Revue des deux Mondes*, and M. Tengoborski, a confidential employé of the Government at St. Petersburg, and the well-known author of some valuable statistical works upon Austria and Russia, in the course of which the latter published some facts not before given to the world upon such high authority, which incidentally threw a little light upon the mystery of Russian finance. As he did not, however, give us a complete budget, I subjoin a detailed account of the income and expenditure of the Russian Government, which I obtained at St. Petersburg. The accounts are of old date, and for various years, and although I have no reason to doubt, in the main, their correctness, yet I do not offer them as of any statistical value, but merely as a means of comparing the several items, and estimating their relative importance, more especially as respects the various sources of income :—

INCOME FOR THE YEAR 1842.

Total 617,500,000 paper roubles ( $10\frac{1}{2}d.$  each), or £27,000,000 sterling.

*Principal Items for the Year 1845.*

	Paper Roubles ( $10\frac{1}{2}d.$ each.)
Spirits . . . . .	160,000,000
Customs . . . . .	103,000,000
Capitation and other direct Taxes . . . . .	70,800,000
Stamps . . . . .	22,000,000
Salt Monopoly . . . . .	18,000,000
Mines . . . . .	20,000,000
* Gold Duty . . . . .	21,000,000
Tobacco . . . . .	8,000,000
Licences, Spirits, &c. . . . .	27,000,000
Passports and Personal Licences . . . . .	10,000,000
Post Offices . . . . .	7,000,000

\* The Government does not work the gold mines itself, but receives a percentage on the produce, which averages a little over three millions sterling per annum.

## EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR 1838.

Total 505,116,000 paper roubles ( $10\frac{1}{2}d.$  each), or £22,100,000 sterling.

	Paper Roubles ( $10\frac{1}{2}d.$ each.)
Civil List . . . . .	17,550,000
Clergy . . . . .	4,540,000
Diplomacy . . . . .	5,300,000
Navy . . . . .	35,350,000
Army . . . . .	186,400,000
Interior Administration . . . . .	34,700,000
National Education . . . . .	14,360,000
Roads, Canals, &c. . . . .	8,950,000
Colonisation . . . . .	2,300,000
Encouragement to Industry . . . . .	302,000
Public Buildings . . . . .	3,200,000
Pensions . . . . .	19,500,000
Ditto in Land . . . . .	5,960,000
Donations . . . . .	1,800,000
Expenses of Collection and Administration of Finances . . . . .	67,185,000
Interest of Debt . . . . .	85,000,000
Reserve Fund . . . . .	12,000,000

In casting the eye over the above items, under the head of Income, our first inquiry naturally is, "To what extent are they likely to be diminished by the war?" With the exception of the Customs revenue, amounting, in the above account, to four millions sterling, or one-seventh of the whole, all the others come under our denomination of "Inland Revenue," against which no direct blow can be struck by the blockade. M. Tengoborski, who puts down the income from Customs duties at five millions sterling, for the average of the five years 1848—1852 (alleging a great increase during the preceding years), assumes that a falling off of a million, or 20 per cent., will occur in consequence of the blockade. I suspect that he under-estimates the loss. It will be seen, by the above account, that nearly a third part of the income of the Russian Government arises from spirit duties and licences. The revenue from gold mines, capitation tax, stamps, or even customs, sinks

into insignificance in comparison with the money raised from intoxicating drinks. So far from my account being an exaggeration, this terrible feature in Russian finance assumes even more hideous proportions in M. Tengoborski's statement, for he puts down nearly fourteen millions sterling for the excise on spirits, out of a total revenue of  $37\frac{1}{2}$  millions, or more than one-third of the whole; and he adds that, so far from anticipating a large loss upon this item, "the contracts entered into for farming the spirit licences for 1855 and 1856, in a great number of provinces, show an augmentation, as compared with 1853, of several hundred thousand francs." He states that the total ordinary revenue of the Russian Government for 1853 was  $37\frac{1}{2}$  millions sterling; that in 1839 it was only about 27 millions, thus showing an increase of 10 millions, or 36 per cent., in fifteen years; and that this has arisen without any augmentation of existing imposts. It will be seen that the account furnished to me makes the revenue in 1842 to have been 27 millions, the same as is set down above for 1839. If the statement given to me was correct, the whole of the alleged increase of 10 millions took place between 1842 and 1853, which, in the absence of any reform in the tariff, and whilst protective and prohibitive duties were steadily devouring the Customs revenue, is so extraordinary as to warrant the epithets, "enormous, unlooked-for, and incredible," which burst from M. Faucher, when commenting on the figures, and it will certainly require all the weight of M. Tengoborski's statistical reputation to give currency to such a statement. Upon the whole revenue for 1854, he estimated a loss of only about two millions sterling, an opinion which I have no doubt the last year's experience has long since dispelled.

In dealing with the expenditure side of the account, he confines himself to the only items which interest us at the present time—the military and naval budgets. In the above detailed account of the expenditure for 1838 the army is set down at £8,150,000, and the navy at £1,500,000. M.

Tengoborski says that an effective army of from 800,000 to 900,000 men can be kept up in Russia for £14,000,000, and a corresponding navy for £2,400,000; and that if even the effective force of the army were carried to 1,250,000 men it could be maintained for £22,000,000. Upon this subject he was at issue with M. Faucher, who had set down a much higher estimate, and had arrived at the conclusion that the annual deficit beyond its ordinary revenue which the Russian Government would have to make good for carrying on the war would amount to £20,000,000. Warming with his subject, the Russian functionary thus meets even this challenge of the Frenchman: "But admitting that in consequence of extraordinary and unforeseen expenses the deficit even amounted to this sum, which I wholly discredit, I know enough of the financial position of Russia and of the means at her disposal to venture to affirm with confidence that she would be able to bear it, even during many years, from her extraordinary internal resources; and if even it were necessary to augment the debt during the war from one to two milliards (forty to eighty millions sterling), this burden, great as it is in itself, would not be in disproportion with the natural resources of the country and those at the disposal of the Government, as is apparent from the immense properties it possesses." It is well to see to what extent and with what confidence a man of reputation on financial matters, and a "privy councillor of the Russian Empire," will commit himself and his Government for the future, even if we do find on analysing the details of his case that he breaks down in his ways and means. I confess, with all possible respect for the talents of M. Tengoborski, I attach very little value to these estimates of the income and expenditure of the Russian Government in a time of war. He makes too light of the general depression of affairs throughout the empire which must follow from a protracted war, and of a consequent falling off in all branches of the revenue; and he forgets the unforeseen expenses, those "supplementary



estimates" with which we are so well acquainted in the House of Commons. War is a monster whose appetite grows so fast by what it feeds on that it is quite impossible beforehand to measure its capacity for consumption, and the only safe way is to be provided with far more than at any given time seems likely to be required for its support. The writer in question does not condescend to say how the money will be raised in the interior of Russia. Those vast territorial possessions of the Government to which he alludes, will *they* be made to do duty as the Mississippi Valley and the Domains of France did under similar exigencies? I believe there is but one resource, and with whatever prudery M. Tengoborski might have averted his eyes and protested against even an allusion to the expedient in August, 1854, yet probably the twelve months' war which has since passed over his head has reconciled him to the inevitable necessity—nay, if we credit the journals, it has already been embraced by the Russian Government.

The banking system of Russia is entirely in the hands of the Government. Banks of issue, deposit, and mortgage are all under imperial direction or guarantee, and a large part of the landed property of the country is mortgaged to these institutions. The Czar is, in fact, the "credit mobilier" and the "credit foncier" of the empire. The great centre of this system is the Bank of Issue founded by Catherine in 1768. At a time when we have in this country a party clamouring for irredeemable small notes, and who may be nearer success than many of us suppose, a few words on the career of this establishment may not be inappropriate.

For twenty years after the foundation of this bank, and whilst paper money was still in its infancy in Russia, its notes retained their par value. Being a legal tender both to the Government and in private transactions, and always convertible at their full value, they acquired public confidence, and being found a convenience in the operations of commerce they sometimes rose to a premium. But being a Government institution,

and every additional rouble put into circulation being so much secured without trouble for the imperial treasury, need we wonder that the temptation proved too great, and that so many notes were issued that there was not sufficient gold and silver to redeem them on demand? Once relieved by its own act from this obligation, the Government, like all others in similar circumstances, went on coining paper money not according to the wants of the public, but to meet its own necessities. The consequence was a continual depreciation in its value, commencing in 1788 and extending over a period of more than half a century, the notes sometimes falling to nearly a fifth of their nominal value, then again recovering a little, till at last the rouble note, nominally worth 3s. 4d., settled down at about 10½d., at which it remained for several years, until by a ukase in 1843 the old notes were called in *at that rate*, and exchanged by the Government for new notes at *the old rate of 3s. 4d.*, giving until the year 1848 for completing the exchange. From that time the accounts have been wholly kept in the restored currency called silver roubles to distinguish them from the old depreciated paper rouble of 10½d. with which the people had been accustomed to keep their accounts.

But, as this transaction brought home to every man's understanding and pocket a proof of the inherent vice and insecurity of paper money, the plan for restoring the currency was accompanied by safeguards and protestations which were to prevent the possibility of any future frauds. The Government, knowing itself to be suspected, put forth a plan for keeping at all times so large a reserve of specie as should secure the holders of notes against the possibility of loss; and this stock of bullion, instead of being entrusted to the control of the Government alone, was to be confided to a mixed commission, comprising deputations of merchants, nobles, and foreign consuls, joined with a Government commission named for the purpose. The place designated for the safe custody of the treasure was the fortress of St. Petersburg, and the presence

of this mixed body of public functionaries and merchants was necessary at all times when an addition to or abstraction from its amount took place, and they were bound to publish every such alteration to the world. In accordance with this regulation, the following notice appeared, some time since, in the papers:—

“RUSSIA.—The *Gazette du Commerce* says:—‘The stock of coin kept on hand for the purpose of cashing bank notes having diminished, it has been thought necessary to replace what is wanting by transporting 5,000,000 of roubles from the fortress of St. Petersburg. On the day appointed for this purpose, in the presence of the assistants, of the comptroller of the empire, the members of the committee of revision, the delegates from the Bourse, and the foreign commercial *chargés d'affaires*, the sum destined to be removed was taken from the vaults of the fortress. It consisted of 2,000,000 roubles in gold, and 3,000,000 in silver. This sum, under guard of the above-mentioned personages, and escorted by infantry and cavalry, was transported to the dépôt of the Bank. The council of the Bank, in full sitting, under the presidency of Prince Alexander Ivanowitsch Tschermyscheff, and in the presence of the above gentlemen, assured themselves that the sum was the same as that taken from the fortress. The Act relative to the removal was then signed by all present. This Act, among other things, establishes the fact that there remained in the vaults of the fortress of Peter and Paul, after the removal of the five million roubles, 101,528,595 roubles.’”

Such were the formalities and precautions taken to secure the convertibility of the paper circulation, and *this time*, at all events, it was thought that the public was safe from the possibility of a depreciated currency. Seven years have hardly elapsed since the existing paper money came exclusively into use, and yet who can doubt that, if it have not already begun, it is on the verge of again beginning the same course of depreciation as was run by the *assignats* which preceded it? It is

now 87 years since the Bank was founded. During sixty years its notes have been inconvertible; for a great part of that period they were not worth a third of their nominal value, and the Bank could only emerge from its state of insolvency by throwing the whole of the loss, arising from its own breach of faith, upon the public. And this, with more or less of modification, is the history of Government banks of issue, and to some extent of private banks also, all the world over.

I know not to what other internal or external resources the Russian Privy Councillor may look for making up the deficit occasioned by the war, which he says can be met for many years: but I have not the least doubt that, if driven to extremities, one of the expedients will be the appropriation of the reserve fund of the Bank, and the issue of inconvertible notes. Whether some fresh device may be invented, such as the pledging for security the five-sixths of the Russian Empire, now occupied by its forests, steppes, and marshes, I know not; but the Allied Powers will entertain a higher opinion of the morality of the Government of St. Petersburg than myself, if they do not take for granted that, before it will submit to what it considers ignominious terms of peace, it will avail itself of the resources of the Bank, and all the temporary financial expedients which its machinery will afford.

In the controversy to which I have alluded, M. Leon Faucher, quoting from the Paris *Moniteur*, put down the reserve of bullion belonging to the Bank of St. Petersburg, in March, 1854, at 116 millions of silver roubles, or £19,333,000. M. Tengoborski, in his correction of this statement, is very explicit; and as it is a subject upon which, hitherto, no secrecy has been observed, but as, on the contrary, publicity has formed a prominent part of the system, I do not believe that a man in his position would have put his name to a statement so easily disproved, if incorrect, unless he was sure of its truth. "The reserved bullion," he says, "amounted in March last not to 116 millions, but to 159,918,000 silver roubles

(£26,653,000), and it is at this present time (16—28 Sept., 1854) 146,563,000 roubles (£24,427,000), being more than 42 per cent. of the total amount of bank notes in circulation, and held by the banks (*dans les caisses de l'état*), which amounts to 345,927,000 roubles (£69,185,400).” This is a large sum of bullion, more than is at present to be found in the vaults of the two great national Banks, in London and Paris, together; and although it may have undergone considerable diminution, there is doubtless enough to fill up the deficit to be caused by another campaign, and to that purpose, failing all other resources, it may safely be assumed that it will be devoted. This is, however, but the smaller part of the assistance which the Government will find in the National Bank, should the war be pushed to extremities. It will be seen that the amount of notes in the hands of the public, and in the *caisses* of the Government establishments, is set down at 345,927,000 roubles. To what extent could this paper money be increased, after it had been rendered irredeemable by the abstraction of the specie reserve?

At the time of the conversion of the old paper roubles, in 1843, there were more than 600 millions in circulation, which had for some time retained the value of about  $10\frac{1}{2}\%$ ; and 200 millions had been previously brought up and burnt. But at no time, not even during the invasion of Napoleon, had they fallen to so low as a fifth of their nominal value, or  $8\%$ . The lowest point was on the return of Napoleon from Elba, when they fell for a short time to  $20\frac{1}{2}\%$  per cent. The greatly extended trade of the country, since that time, would enable the Government to put into circulation a much larger amount of paper money, and yet preserve for it a greater exchangeable value, than during the wars of the French Revolution. It would be impossible, of course, to do more than offer a conjecture as to the effect of an operation which depends so much upon moral causes. But assuming that the Government were supported by the people, as there is every reason to believe it is at

present, I do not see that it would be impossible to increase the circulation to 1,000 millions of roubles; and making every allowance for the great depreciation of its value, and the loss which the public treasury must suffer from being a receiver as well as payer of money, yet supposing that the increased issue of roubles, beyond the present amount, should only pass on an average from the first hand at a shilling each, instead of 3s. 4d., their nominal value, the Government would raise by the process an amount exceeding 30 millions sterling. And I have not a doubt that this estimate is greatly below the mark; for it must be borne in mind that the hand that controls this paper mint has a great advantage in making the first payments in an irredeemable currency, which does not for a long time, in a country like Russia, find its level of depreciation. Here, then, is a resource which will enable the Russian Government to meet the deficits during two more campaigns, so that the expense of three years' defensive war on her own soil may be borne with the aid of the bullion and paper of the Bank, without including any of those other resources to which M. Tengoborski alluded, but which he forgot to specify. And it must be borne in mind that we are only dealing with a deficit to be caused by the expenses of the war exceeding the ordinary expenditure, which itself includes, as will be seen by a glance at my table for 1838, a charge of £8,150,000 for the army and £1,500,000 for the navy. The cost of the navy will cease with the inactivity or destruction of the fleets; and it must always be remembered that a country whose wealth and population are in the interior, and whose capitals are inaccessible, can, by falling back for a time, from the coast towards its resources, limit, to any extent, the expenses of a defensive war.

There are circumstances which render the expedient of a depreciated currency less ruinous to an agricultural people, like the Russians, than to a more wealthy, mercantile, or manufacturing nation, such as England or Holland. The Russians are not lenders, either at home or abroad, and it is the creditor

class which suffers from depreciation. Private mortgages are hardly known in Russia; they are all effected at the Government loan and deposit banks. To such an extent are these transactions carried, that M. Leon Faucher puts down the liabilities of the Government, for floating debts and deposits, payable on demand, at £200,000,000, to which M. Tengoborski makes but a weak objection. In case of a suspension of specie payments, there would, no doubt, be an arrangement for carrying over these engagements. Again, leases are hardly known; and the relations between the proprietor and the occupier of the soil, owing to the serfage of the latter, involve but few pecuniary contracts. The chief transactions of agriculturists, unlike those of traders, are everywhere confined to one or two seasons of the year. In Russia they take place once a year, and to a large extent at the fairs, which are held in all parts of the empire. These are some of the peculiarities which would tend to mitigate the pressure of a depreciation on the population of that country.

On the other hand, where, besides, could a Government, with money at its command, find, among its own subjects, such a cheap supply of all that constitutes the main wants of an army? Corn, cattle, coarse woollens, linens, and every article made of leather, are to be had in as great abundance, and especially in the direction of the seat of war in the south of Russia, as in any part of the world. With the exception of sulphur and saltpetre, there is scarcely an article for the commissariat or ordnance department of the army for which it would be necessary to send abroad. For the interest on that part of the public debt held by foreigners, specie would be required. M. Tengoborski informs us that the entire interest of the funded and floating debt of the empire, together with the sinking fund, absorbs only  $21\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of its ordinary revenue, "a smaller proportion than in any other of the principal States of Europe, with the exception of Prussia." As, according to the same authority, the ordinary revenue of Russia is  $37\frac{1}{2}$



millions, this would give about £8,000,000, for the interest and sinking fund of the debt ; but I have no information as to the proportion held by foreigners.

It would be to deceive ourselves were we to assume that the degradation of the standard would involve the country in political anarchy or confusion, or array against the Government any great amount of popular discontent. No shock is produced upon a community by a change which is so gradual in its nature that it leaves no man perceptibly poorer to-day than he was yesterday, and which, so far as the process is felt at all, operates to the relief of those who are in debt, a class which, in Russia, at least is both numerous and influential. Nor, so long as she provides for the payment in specie of her foreign creditors, would her rank and standing abroad be compromised by the depreciation of her currency. Look at Austria ; courted by the Eastern and Western Powers, the very pivot of European diplomacy ; yet, all the while, with scarcely a coin of any kind in circulation throughout her empire, and with her paper money ranging, during the last five years, at from 20 to 50 per cent. discount.

No one who does me the honour to peruse these pages will fail to perceive the great and manifold advantages which we have surrendered to our antagonist by invading his territory. Had he been our assailant, the resources of a depreciated currency would not have availed him, to the extent of a shilling, one mile beyond his own frontiers. Besides, there are few objects for which a people will support their Government in the derangement of their standard of value. But the defence of their territory against a foreign enemy is one of these ; and we may be sure that the spirit of patriotism which prompted the Dutch, when invaded, to cut their dykes, and the inhabitants of Moscow to give their city to the flames, will rally to the support of the Russian Government, if it should resolve upon the desperate expedient—hardly less ruinous in the end than fire or inundation—of flooding the country with inconvertible paper



money. Nor should we forget the successful part which this engine of finance has played in the defence of nations. The *assignats* of France undoubtedly enabled its people to beat back from its frontiers the armies of confederated Europe ; and, without the “continental currency” of America, it may well be questioned whether Washington could have kept his levies together. Both these currencies fell to the value of waste-paper in the end, but they served the purpose of an inexhaustible gold mine for two or three campaigns.

In the whole of my remarks, which, so far as they apply exclusively to Russia, I have now brought to a close, I have assumed that it is the determination of the Allies not to grant a peace to that power until they have imposed on her what she considers abject and ignominious terms of submission, the acceptance of which on her part, before she shall have exhausted her powers of resistance, and every means of endurance, would be regarded by the world as a national dishonour. I have, in fact, gone upon the supposition that the sentiments which I have heard so loudly expressed, since the commencement of the war, by persons of all classes in this country, represent the views of our Government. I would not be thought to have entertained the belief that the Russian Government and people would subject themselves to such evils and sufferings as have been contemplated, unless in what they considered a life or death struggle.

And now, having probed pretty freely the resources of our opponents, let us glance for a moment at the other side of the question, by adding a very few words on

#### OUR OWN POSITION AND PROSPECTS.

Were I convinced that a perfect accordance of opinion existed between the reader and myself as to the arduous character of the struggle in which the country is embarked, I should deem it but a poor compliment to his sagacity to offer to prove that before we can achieve those triumphs for which

I have given credit to the Allies, and which will still leave undecided the issue of the war, great and long-continued sacrifices will be required at our hands. But I will confess—and let it be my excuse for what I am about to say—that I am haunted with the fear that not one in ten thousand of those who talk of humbling Russia on her own soil have appreciated half the difficulties of the task; nay, I doubt whether they have realised in their minds the serious nature of the act of invading that country. On the contrary, I have heard objection taken to the words “the invasion of Russia” as inapplicable to the descent upon the Crimea, and this in the face of the fact that the Allies have destroyed or taken possession of posts extending nearly a thousand miles along her coasts; that they are awaiting only the return of spring to renew the war upon her territory with an army exceeding in numbers that which gained the battles of Borodino or Austerlitz; and that the Russians have shown by the levy *en masse* of their population that they consider the fate of their empire as much at stake as they did in their resistance to Napoleon in 1812.

Not only is this an invasion of Russia, but it must surpass all others in history in the cost of men and money necessary for its success; for never before was an army sent 3,000 miles by sea to land in the territory of the most populous and, for defensive war, the most powerful military nation of the time, with no prospect of assistance from any part of its population, and compelled to bring all their provisions, even to the forage for their cattle, after them by sea. When Napoleon entered that country, it formed no part of his calculation to provide for the subsistence of his army after the successful close of his first campaign, for once in possession of Moscow he reckoned on his usual mode of subsisting upon the enemy; and although he made greater previous provision than was his wont for the supply of food on the line of march, yet the accounts we have from eye-witnesses of the devastations

mitted in the territories through which he passed, leave no room to doubt how much the army was left to depend on forced requisitions and plunder by the way. But in the present case, from the moment that the French and English soldiers leave their own shores to step on board the vessel which conveys them to the Crimea, begins that direct money drain for every article of their food, clothing, and transport, from which no conceivable success can relieve the Governments at home. Again, when Napoleon set off for his Russian campaign he knew that all along the line of march from the Seine to the Niemen, army corps after army corps were ready to fall into his ranks; but what reinforcements await France and England from the countries that lie between them and their great northern foe? True, a few recruits are picked up by the way at Genoa, but at the expense of something very like a subsidy from our Government; and as for the ally at whose invitation we make this great effort, instead of finding aid of any kind in his dominions, he adds to our burdens by his pecuniary requisitions, and the Western Powers are obliged to enter into a convention for feeding his troops, even on the very borders of the Ottoman empire.

In what page of our history shall we find an expedition to the continent undertaken in the midst of disadvantages and difficulties such as these? Not in those early times when our kings laid claim to the sovereignty of France, for then we had at least a foothold in that country; not in the days of Marlborough, whose armies were always disembarked on a friendly shore either to fight on neutral ground, or with a secure basis of operations on the Continent itself; not in more recent times when we landed at Walcheren, or Quiberon, or Toulon, for there at least we believed that the population were ready to espouse our cause; nor when Wellington set sail for the Peninsula with the full assurance that the Spanish and Portuguese people would eagerly flock to his standard. No, the undertaking in which we have now embarked has no parallel for magnitude

in the annals of war; and if success is to attend it to the extent promised us by its advocates, a greater expenditure of life and treasure will be required than was ever poured out in any one military operation. Are we in England prepared with the quota of men and money which, from month to month and year to year, we shall be expected to contribute?

And first, of the men. In analysing the resources of Russia for a defensive war, I did not think it necessary to discuss the question of her ability to find soldiers enough to outnumber (I do not speak of quality) the armies of her enemies on her own territory. Assuming that that would be taken for granted, as was done by M. Leon Faucher in the paper to which I have referred, I addressed myself only to the inquiry as to how far she could supply them with pay and subsistence. But an attempt has lately been made by those who labour with such fatal success to depreciate the power of the enemy and lull us into a false security to show that, even in the supply of men, Russia will fall short of her assailants. One moment's reflection upon the state of society in that country ought to have prevented such an attempt upon the credulity of the nation. Russia, by the latest statistical returns, contains 62,000,000 of inhabitants, of whom 5,413,000 only live in towns, and 56,587,000 constitute the rural population, being, of course, by far the most agricultural people in Europe. But of this small urban population, comprising little more than one-twelfth of the whole, it may safely be said that not much above one-half would be dignified with the attribute of town life in England, for 627 of the towns have less than 10,000 inhabitants each, with an aggregate of 2,400,000 souls, and 188 of these "towns" are put down with a population under 2,000. And any one who has travelled in Russia must have observed what the government tables indeed inform us, that more than six-sevenths of the houses in these so-called towns are built entirely of wood. In fact, Russia is, as has been already said, a great village. Now it is precisely in this state of society that not

only are men to be found in the greatest numbers capable of enduring the hardships and exposures of camp life, but where they can be spared with the least inconvenience and loss—I speak in an economical sense only—for the destructive processes of war. I am aware of the sacrifices occasioned to the nobles by the withdrawal of the serfs from their estates and of the great expense of conveying them to the scene of hostilities, nor am I losing sight of the repugnance of the peasant to a soldier's life. But the men are there, and if money and sufficient motive be not wanting, they will be forthcoming. And just as recruiting in England is more successful for the militia than the line, because it does not involve the liability to be sent abroad, so in the same degree in the present war will the Russian be reconciled to a service which does not require him to be carried beyond the bounds of the empire. This is one more illustration of the great disadvantages under which we have placed ourselves by making the territory of Russia our battle-field, and which will be more apparent as we turn to the question of the supply of men in our own country.

When M. Kossuth made his first journey through Great Britain, he drew the inference, from the employments of the population, that in case of a war we should find it difficult to recruit our armies. He saw at a glance, what our last census tables had informed us, that a majority of the inhabitants of this island live in towns, and that a much smaller portion of our people are employed in agriculture than in any other country of Europe. Had he been travelling in Russia, he would, of course, have drawn the directly opposite conclusion, for he is not ignorant that it is from the agricultural class that large movable armies have always been raised. The reason of this is so obvious that, but for the attempt to draw the opposite conclusion in the present war, I should not have said one word on the subject. There are two obstacles in the way of raising large movable armies for service in the field among the population of towns, the one physical, and the other economical,

Men habituated to indoor life, and who never, perhaps, slept out of a warm and dry bed, however robust they may be, would succumb under the first trials of such exposure and hardships as are inseparable from a camp life. Their whole training is a disqualification for such an ordeal ; whilst, on the contrary, the Russian peasant, whom I have seen passing the night with indifference in the open air, with no other covering than his sheep-skin coat, even in the month of October, would suffer very little loss of comfort in exchanging his every-day life for that of the hut or the cave in the Crimea.

I have used the term *movable army*, because I would wish to draw a distinction between the inability to endure the privation of those comforts which habit alone has rendered necessary for the health of the townsman, and the want of spirit, or courage, to perform the part of a combatant. There is no little cant afloat about the enervating effects of towns. Their moral tendency is exactly the reverse. The most spirited part of the population of every country is always found in its towns. From the time when, to the disgust of old Froissart, the weavers of Ghent routed the chivalry of the 14th century, down to the heroic resistance made, in modern days, by Saragossa, Venice, and Rome, we have innumerable instances where the superior courage of the inhabitants of towns has borne up against every thing but the most overwhelming odds, or famine. We all know that the train-bands of London—even since the metropolis contained more inhabitants than are to be found, in our day, in any other town in the kingdom—ranked amongst the very best fighting men of their time. But we also know that they had a great repugnance to finding themselves further from their beds than Blackheath or Brentford.

But there is another reason why the recruiting sergeant cannot fill the ranks of the army from among our urban population. Man is too precious, and labour too valuable, to be purchased at his price. So vast an accumulation of capital,

which would be rendered valueless without the labour to which it is united, is bidding against him, and bidding so high that, unless he raise his terms five or ten-fold, he has no chance of enlisting large armies from among the industrial population of our towns. And the workmen are not only retained by the high value which this fixed capital imparts to their toil, but also by that division of labour which combines them, like the links of a chain, in mutual dependence on each other. If you attempt to break to pieces this social mechanism, by taking away a part here and a part there, you will do far more injury to it, as a whole, than can be compensated by the value of the portions applied to other uses. No, a manufacturing community is of all others the least adapted for great aggressive military enterprises, like that in which we have embarked. In defending themselves at their own doors, such an industrial organisation might afford greater facilities, probably, than any other state of society; for the men being already marshalled (so to speak) in regiments and companies, and known to their employers, the resources of the capitalists, and the services of the labourers, might be brought, with precision and economy, into instant and most extended co-operation. We read that Jack of Newbury (the Gott of his day, led 100 of his clothiers, at his own expense, to Flodden Field: and, if the spirit of patriotism were roused by the attack of a foreign enemy, I have no doubt we should see our great manufacturing capitalists competing for the honour of equipping and paying the greatest number of men, until our shores were freed from the presence of the invader. But I am obliged to pre-suppose an invasion of our own territory, before assuming that all ranks would be roused to take a part in the struggle.

Now, can it be doubted that to subdue Russia to our will, on her own soil, is a task ten times more difficult than it would be to capture any army that could possibly be landed on our shores? And yet, far from seeing all classes press forward, as they would do if the Russians were besieging Portsmouth,



there is so great a disinclination to take a personal share in the war, that, although the bounty has been twice raised, the standard as often lowered, and the time of service shortened, it has been found impossible to fill the ranks of the army or militia. I must be always understood to draw a distinction between the zeal for the war, as displayed in speeches, leading articles, resolutions, and cheers, and that exhibited in the form of solid bone and muscle, which alone will avail us on Russian territory. Nobody denies that, as far as words go, we have carried on the war with vigour. But has it never occurred to those who threaten the enemy with the extremity of humiliation, that, if their menacing language be not followed up by commensurate performances, it may react to our own disadvantage? If, for instance, the *Times*, which will be taken at St. Petersburg as an exponent of British opinion, tells the Russians that "the only object that we need recognise is to reduce the enemy to the lowest possible condition, and compel him to sue for his very existence," what other effect can it have but to stimulate that nation to greater efforts, from the belief that its very life is at stake, and the apprehension that our exertions to crush its armies in the field will be as formidable as our threats? But if no bolt accompany this thunder,—if the power of England be represented on Russian soil by an army of raw lads, and of them an insufficient number, we not only enhance the difficulties of our own position by this preliminary bluster, but we place our Allies at the same disadvantage, and actually help to raise the prestige of Russian power.

I foresee a possible danger to the alliance in which we are engaged, unless there be found in Parliament a disposition to act up to its duty, and to speak the honest truth to both the Government and the people. The Government should be called on for a return of the weekly recruitments up to the present time, both for the militia and the line. Let not the stereotyped excuse, that the public service will suffer by the exposure,



deter us from knowing the truth. The Russian Government knows exactly the state of our army and militia. They have only to consult the pages of those periodicals which are the technical organs of the military profession, to discover the state of the English army. The United Service Magazine has for months held far stronger language than myself upon the subject, and, in its last number, it speaks almost in the accents of despair. If it be found that the recruiting is still as deficient as it was last summer, then, were the Parliament to go on voting men, with the knowledge that they will not be forthcoming by voluntary enlistment, it would make itself a party to a delusion from which nothing but disaster and disgrace can ensue. A frank understanding must be come to upon this vital question between the House of Commons and the people. Hitherto, the British public appear to have regarded the army as an abstraction,—as something which the Government and Parliament can provide, from some source apart from themselves. This illusion has been dispelled by putting ourselves in contact, as friend and foe, with the two greatest military empires of the Continent. Let the whole truth be known; and, happily, the country may renounce the attempt to become a first-class military power, and then the danger to our alliance with France will be removed; for we shall cease to resist her more pacific tendencies, by a cry for war so shockingly disproportioned to our ability to carry it on.

If we turn from the subject of men to that of money, we find the advantage so completely on the side of the Allies, that, had the seat of war been anywhere but on the territory of Russia, her financial difficulties would have long since determined the struggle. The expenses already incurred by England for freight of transports alone, to carry her army and its supplies to the Crimea, exceed what Russia could have met, with ready money payments, in any other way than by resorting to the reserve fund of the Bank, or applying to Western Europe for a loan: and, if I could believe that here, as in Russia, the

government and people were thoroughly united as to the object of the war—that it excited the same spirit of patriotic or religious enthusiasm, or that it involved, in the opinion of the population, the security of the country—I should not entertain a doubt of the ability and willingness of the nation to bear the burdens which a war expenditure of several years will undoubtedly entail. But it is because I doubt whether any one of these conditions can be fulfilled on our side, that I venture to offer a few words of caution on the financial view of the question.

Every man deserving the name of a statesman, who has given his sanction to the terms which are understood to have been presented to Russia as the conditions of peace (I mean the dismantling of her forts on the Black Sea, the surrender of territory on the banks of the Danube, and the engagement not to build ships of war in that sea, or anything like these terms), will have made up his mind to the probable alternative of at least three years' continuance of war. But few even of our statesmen have probably realised to themselves the effects of the war on the trade, finances, and population of the country. Upon this great subject I can do little more, with my limited space, than suggest topics for reflection, in the briefest possible terms.

One of the common arguments for inspiring us with confidence in our resources, is to point to the ease with which Pitt raised money for the great war of the French Revolution, when our population and trade were so much less than at present. Nothing can be more fallacious. Far from raising the money with ease, in less than four years, after convulsing repeatedly the commerce of the country with his loans, he was driven to the disgraceful resource of irredeemable bank notes, or a modified national bankruptcy; whilst the people, previously prosperous and happy, were in the third year of the war plunged into such a depth of misery and discontent, that they rose in partial insurrection against the Government, and vented their vengeance

even on the person of the Sovereign. A great part of the time of Parliament, during the session of 1795, was occupied by measures for mitigating the terrible sufferings of the nation, on the one hand, and averting the natural consequence, rebellion, on the other. Had not the landed interest been an exception to this state of suffering, the war would not have lasted five years.

And yet the country entered into the war of 1793 with some advantages, as compared with the state of things in our day. The annual charge for the interest and sinking fund of the national debt was then £9,000,000. The interest now payable is £27,000,000. The labour of this generation is contributing, every year, £18,000,000 towards the expenses of the war in which our fathers indulged from 1793 to 1815. We had, moreover, just begun the application of steam-power to our manufactures, which, together with the mechanical inventions of Arkwright and others, had given a sudden and great expansion to our trade, and brought fabulous gains to our capitalists. The war, and the revolutions, retarded, for several years, the adoption of these discoveries on the continent, and left us in exclusive possession of that manufacturing system which has since taken root in every country of Europe. Even the capital of the continent, to escape from war exactions, and the alarming political doctrines of the day, took refuge in large amounts in this country, and helped to swell the tide of our manufacturing prosperity. We possessed, at the same time, a monopoly of the commerce of every sea, and of a great part of the earth's surface. Not a ship could sail, whether under an American or European flag, but with our permission, and under the regulations of our government. We had seized upon the colonies of France and Holland, and all the exportable produce of the East and West Indies, and a great part of the South American continent were brought to our ports ; so that no coffee, sugar, or other colonial articles, or even the raw materials of several of their manufactures, could reach the people of the continent

except through this country. We have no longer these exclusive privileges. The right of search, which we enforced against the United States even at the cost of bloodshed, we hastened to renounce at the commencement of the present war ; and the ships of that great maritime power, with a tonnage which now more than equals our own, have not only free access to every port of Europe—not actually closed by an effective blockade—but they share, on equal terms, the commerce of our colonies. Everywhere, in Europe and America, the manufacturers are maintaining a rivalry with our own, and, excepting in France, all are enjoying the advantages of peace.

Again, we hear people cite the immense increase in the assessment of real property and income ; the number of houses ; the vast investments in railways, docks, mills, manufactories, mines, &c., as a proof how much more competent we are now, than at any former time, to bear the expenses of war. If we possessed virtue and self-denial sufficient to meet the expenditure of the war out of the annual revenue of the population, these are sources from which it might be obtained, not, certainly, without inconvenience, but without any sudden shock to our industrial interest. But, as it is certain that the money will be now, as it was in the time of Pitt, raised chiefly by loans, it will be almost wholly abstracted from the floating capital of the country, which would otherwise, in great part, be available for the employment of labour upon reproductive investments. They who fall into the belief that this is an inexhaustible fund, will do well to call to mind the crisis which was caused in our money market, a few years ago, by a great and sudden demand for railways, and the stringency which followed the rapid extension of the Australian trade, to say nothing of the present rate of interest at the very commencement of the war loans.

Dazzled by the visible signs of realised wealth which surround us, we are apt to overrate the resources of the country for any new undertaking ; and to calculate, as available for investment, the capital which is already invested. Wars are not

carried on with fixed capital, but with that which serves, like the circulating fluid of the human system, as its animating principle. This floating capital, from which all new demands, whether for the support of armies and navies, or of railway excavators, must be satisfied, is, probably, larger in positive amount in our day than at any former time; but never before did it bear so small a comparative ratio to the fixed capital of the country; and, consequently, never was the danger so great of inflicting heavy loss upon the capitalists, or such widespread sufferings upon the labourers, by absorbing, for purposes of war, that floating capital without which our mills and furnaces, our steam engines, docks, and railways become as valueless as if the timber and iron of which they are constructed were still in their native mines or forests; and, deprived of which, our millions of skilled labourers would be as destitute in the midst of all this fixed capital, as if it had no existence. These are but trite truisms; but I am afraid there is much misapprehension abroad on the subject, which a few years' experience may painfully dispel.

We cannot too fully realise to our minds the effects of a succession of loans in London, Paris,\* and other great money

\* I have for obvious reasons, avoided all allusion to the resources of our great Ally. If I had published, on my own authority, the financial statement of which I am about to give a summary, I should have been accused of laying bare the weak side of a friend to the eye of the enemy. Now, nothing can be more infantile than the notion that anything of this kind is concealed from the Russian Government. There is not a fact or conjecture respecting the finances of France, that has not been passed in review, in St. Petersburg, where everything connected with the resources of the Allies, in men and money, is as well known as in Paris or London. In a number of the Brussels paper, *Le Télégraphe*, appeared a communication, dated Paris, December, 10, giving a very detailed account of the ways and means of the French Government for its extraordinary budget of the next year. The last loan was for 750,000,000 francs, (30 millions sterling), 10 per cent paid down, and the rest payable in eighteen monthly instalments; of which there remain 521 millions to be paid, in the thirteen months from December, 1855, to December, 1856, inclusive. This amount, says the writer, is already anticipated in the expenses of the war, and he assumes that a loan of at least 750 millions (£30,000,000) will be required in

markets in Western Europe, such as are inevitable if the war continue for three years longer. Already, the Russians have put forth their terms for eight millions sterling. Before May, France and England will certainly require loans of twenty-five millions each. Sardinia is announced as a borrower; and the same reasons which justified the last guarantee of a Turkish loan will warrant another. To say nothing of the rumours afloat respecting Sweden, Portugal, and other states, here is the pretty certain prospect of from sixty to seventy millions being required for war loans, besides the other demands for the completion of great public works. It cannot be doubted that this must have the effect of sensibly diminishing the amount of floating capital in these three or four countries from which the

April; and, assuming that it will be payable in the same manner as the last, 383 million francs will be required within the year. In addition, he puts down 120 millions for calls falling due on railways in 1856, and 400 millions for the purchase of foreign corn to make up for the deficiency in the harvest, and then the account stands thus:—

	francs.
Instalments of the old loan payable during the next year	521,000,000
„ payable on new loan . . . . .	383,000,000
	<hr/>
	904,000,000
Calls on railways . . . . .	120,000,000
For purchases of foreign corn . . . . .	400,000,000
	<hr/>
Total liability for extraordinaries . . . . .	1,424,000,000
	<hr/>

To meet these extraordinary calls he puts down, first, the savings of the country, which are estimated by the best authorities at twenty million francs a month; and next, the proportion of the precious metals which the balance of trade ordinarily brings to France, at two hundred and twenty million francs:—

	francs.
Savings, twenty millions a month for thirteen months .	260,000,000
Share of precious metals . . . . .	220,000,000
	<hr/>
	480,000,000
	<hr/>

Leaving unprovided . . . . .	944,000,000
or nearly . . . . .	£38,000,000

to come out of former savings, already very much exhausted by previous loans and speculations.

supply is drawn. But war, although the greatest of consumers, not only produces nothing in return, but, by abstracting labour from productive employment and interrupting the course of trade, it impedes, in a variety of indirect ways, the creation of wealth; and, should hostilities be continued for a series of years, each successive war-loan will be felt in our commercial and manufacturing districts with an augmented pressure. The interest of money, that is to say the value of floating capital, will rise, whilst that of nearly all kinds of fixed capital, as well as of labour, will decline. Instead of 6 per cent discount on first-class securities, they will be charged 7, 8, and 10 per cent. The fatal effects of this state of things will fall, in the first place, on those who depend on credit for the means of carrying on their trade. In the last great war the usury laws, however unsound in a natural state of commerce, were, to some extent, a shield to the weak against extortion, during the violent fluctuations of the money-market; for, although they were often evaded under the charges for premium, commission, &c., yet the Bank of England never rising above the legal rate, guaranteed an equality to a large portion of the trading community. But these laws being no longer in force, the rate of interest will rise instantly, upon the needy trader, in proportion to his necessities, and precipitate his fall.

Then will arise from among the commercial class, as there did within three years of the commencement of the war of 1793, a cry for relaxation of the currency laws, and for a larger issue of bank-notes; and I have no doubt that, if the war goes on, those modern alchemists who believe they have discovered the universal menstruum in a few square inches of paper, will be indulged with their panacea of one-pound notes. The effect of this will be to release our sovereigns from the functions of currency, and convert them into capital, to be sent abroad to pay the expenses of the war—an act resembling too much that of the thriftless artisan who parts with the tools of his trade. If the currency be kept at the same level as the

gold would have been, there will be no relief to the debtor class. If it be depreciated by excessive issues of paper, the foreigner will fix us to some honest standard of his own, at Hamburg or Amsterdam, and leave us to the amusement of robbing one another. In that case, I need not point out the very great difference between such a measure here, with our infinite number of engagements, mortgages, and investments, at home and abroad, and in an agricultural country like Russia.

Should we witness such a state of things, of which there can be no doubt if the war be carried on sufficiently long "with vigour," the effects upon the working population would be felt to an extent, and with an intensity, of which past experience of their sufferings afford no example; for the evil will be in proportion to the numbers and density of our manufacturing community, which have attained dimensions that have no parallel in history. I forbear to speculate on all the consequences which might follow from the disorganisation of this industrial population, and the more so because, as they will be the last to suffer from loss of occupation, I will not abandon the hope that the war may terminate before its calamities fall upon them. Happily, this vast social machinery is not without its safety valve, for the assurance of those timid persons who live in dread of its explosive energies. It is the interest of employers, having large amounts invested in fixed capitals, to continue to employ their work-people, long after those investments cease to be profitable. I know instances in which mill-owners, whilst hoping for better times, have preferred to work on at a loss of several thousand pounds a year of their floating capital, rather than, by closing their establishments, to incur far greater sacrifices from the total unproductiveness of their buildings, machinery, labourers' cottages, and all that constitutes their fixed capital; to say nothing of the disadvantage of withdrawing from the market, and losing their connections and customers. There is an honourable pride, too, amongst the tall chimneys, not without its use, which disinclines them



to be the first to cease to smoke. It follows, however, that mischief may be insidiously working when all is apparent prosperity; and this very disposition to prolong the struggle might, under a continued pressure of adverse circumstances, render the ultimate catastrophe only the more sudden and calamitous.

Hitherto the effects of the war have been felt by the working classes, not in the form of loss of employment, but through the high price of food, which has told with great severity on the unskilled labourer, receiving the lowest rate of wages. The most numerous of this class, the agricultural labourers—that mute and helpless multitude who have never made their voice heard in the din of politics, or their presence felt in any social movement—are the greatest sufferers. We have a school of sentimentalists who tell us that war is to elevate man in his native dignity, to depress the money power, put down mammon worship, and the like. Let them take a rural walk (they require bracing) on the downs, or the weald, or the fens, in any part of this island south of the Trent, and they will find the wages of agricultural labourers averaging, at this moment, under twelve shillings a week; let them ask how a family of five persons, which is below *their* average, can live with bread at  $2\frac{1}{2}d.$  a lb. Nobody can tell. But follow the labourer, as he lays down his spade, or mattock, and settles to his dinner, in the nearest barn or shed, and peep into his wallet; or drop into his cottage at 12 o'clock, and inquire what the family dinner consists of: bread, rarely anything better, and not always enough of that: with nothing left out of his earnings for tea, or sugar, or soap, or candles, or clothes, or the schooling of his children, and with his next year's harvest money already mortgaged for shoes. And this is the fate of millions, living at our very doors, who constitute the vast majority of the "agriculturists," of whose great prosperity we now hear so much. Never within the recollection of living man was the farm labourer's condition so bad as at present.

During the last great war, he went straight to the parish board for the "allowance" of 2s. 6d. a head for each child exceeding two; so that with his wages at 14s., if he had five children, his income was raised to upwards of a guinea a week. This might have been unsound political economy, but it stood between the labourer and starvation during the long French war. My indictment against war is that it brutalises the masses, and makes the rich richer and the poor poorer; but never were these evil tendencies developing themselves with such unrelenting pressure as now that the old poor law and the usury laws no longer exist.

I know it has been stated by some, who, it is a stretch of charity to believe, speak in ignorance, that the high price of bread does not arise from the blockade of the Russian ports. But not only does the war cause the rise of price in this market, but throughout the Continent, and over a great part of the world. It is in the order of God's providence that the almost illimitable productive powers of the southern plains of Russia should have been reserved for the supply of food for the densely peopled countries of Western Europe. We have deemed it politically expedient to blockade the Don, the Dnieper, and the other outlets for that region of "Black Earth," whose fertility has excited the amazement of geologists, and from which the sustenance of half Europe might, with proportionate labour and capital, be drawn. But Nature's laws do not bend to the caprice of diplomatists or statesmen. In 1853, the year before the war, between five and six millions of quarters of grain were exported from Russia to Western Europe. The sudden cessation of this supply has carried sorrow and suffering into the abodes of poverty, in England, Holland, Switzerland, and every other manufacturing and commercial country of Europe. Nor can this state of things be changed, so long as the war continues, for it is the natural and normal state of Western Europe to depend for a portion of its food upon the produce of the Eastern portion of the Continent.

We have, for the last year, had a higher average price of wheat than for the last thirty years—higher considerably than in 1847, the year of the Irish famine, when such enormous supplies reached us from Russia; and this notwithstanding that last year's crop in this country was unprecedentedly large, and that the late harvest is considered by competent judges, to have been almost equal to an average. What, then, would be the effect on prices in our market, if, whilst the supplies from the Baltic and the Black Sea were still intercepted by the blockade, one of those really bad harvests, of which we have all known so many, were to recur?

I have thus endeavoured to point out the great obstacles it will be necessary to surmount, and the sacrifices we shall be called on to endure, if we persevere in the attempt to humble Russia on her own territory. Nor do I conceal my desire to awaken the nation from what I cannot but consider its dream of confidence as to the result—a confidence which, with better opportunities than the majority of my countrymen for forming a judgment, I confess I do not share. In saying so, I am aware that I am opposing the present current of public feeling; but where is the man of sense, courage, and honesty, who will deliberately say that the truth ought not to be spoken, because it does not flatter the preconceived impressions of the hour? That I, at least, believe—sincerely and earnestly believe—in the truth of the views I have expressed may be credited, in the absence of any accusation of sinister motives, when I add that these pages have been penned with the conviction that they would bring no present popularity to the writer, but, on the contrary, entail on him no little abuse and misrepresentation.

One word before concluding. I have been asked, by those who have the right to make such an inquiry, what course I should take if, without reference to the past, I were from this moment responsible for the policy of the country. I have no hesitation in answering this question; and, to be still more

practical and unreserved, I will place myself, *but merely for the sake of argument*, in the position of the present Government, and assume, for the moment, the responsibility of their objects and antecedents.

1. I would seek, above all things, to withdraw every British soldier from Russian territory, the invasion of which was a heedless blunder, both in a political and strategical point of view. I mean a blunder in those who still would have carried on the war in other directions. Our army may now be brought away without further loss or discredit. It may not always be so. Russia has been, to all former invaders, the grave or prison of armies, dynasties, and even of empires.

2. With regard to the terms of peace, I should attach no value whatever to the promises of Russia, as a guarantee for the future, the very word guarantee implying that you obtain other security for the performance of a contract on the part of one whose good faith, or competency, you mistrust. We are now at war because Russia would not agree, at the Vienna Conference, to sign a parchment promise not to maintain more than four line-of-battle ships, and a proportionate number of frigates and transports, in the Black Sea.

The terms which are now tendered to Russia are of an analogous character: calling on her to promise not to do certain acts in her own waters, or on her own territory. Yet we are told, at the same time, through the very organ of the Prime Minister which announces these terms, that the Russian Government is "free from the ties of truth and principle, usually binding on nations." But although we believe these promises, if obtained, would not be worth the parchment on which they are written, yet Russia will refuse them with a pertinacity greater and more enduring than probably any terms we could have demanded. It is considered a point of honour in a great empire not to consent to an invasion of the right of sovereignty in its own territory. Diminutive Greece may

submit to a Pacifico outrage, and, by a pathetic appeal to the principles of justice, gain a moral triumph, in the world's opinion, over our dozen line-of-battle ships. But a first-class Power would be dishonoured in submitting to any humiliation of the kind, until after its powers of resistance and endurance were completely exhausted. There could, perhaps, be nothing devised which would lead to a longer struggle, than were England and France to attempt to force America to sign a treaty, binding herself not to keep more than four line-of-battle ships in the Gulf of Mexico; and yet she has only one such vessel in commission, and is not likely to have more. We have, therefore, hit upon terms which involve the maximum of resistance before they will be yielded, and the minimum of advantage when obtained. I would abandon such a policy as repugnant to reason.—What course, then, should I pursue?

3. I should recur to the policy which our Government adopted at the outset of the negotiations, when they turned to Germany and Austria, as most nearly concerned in the danger, and the only countries which could obstruct the march of Russia westward; for if they leave the door open, it is in vain for us to try and close it. Now, the geography of Europe has not changed since the first negotiations at Vienna. If Germany and Austria occupied an important position then, they are relatively more powerful now, inasmuch as the other powers are weakened by war; and if hostilities go on for a year or two, and they remain at peace, their relative weight in the European scale will be still more increased. We must discard the idea that Austria, Prussia, or Germany will join us in the present war. It has been a sad reproach to our sagacity that for eighteen months—since the retreat of the Russians from the Danube began—we have been deluding ourselves with the notion that those countries, whose interests are on that river, would follow us in our invasion of the Crimea. When the Duke of Newcastle wrote his celebrated despatch to Lord

Raglan, on the 29th of June, 1854, recommending in these terms the expedition to the Crimea—"the retreat of the Russian army across the Danube, and the anticipated evacuation of the Principalities, *have given a new character to the war*, and will render it necessary for you without delay, &c."—he and the Cabinet must have known that this retreat of the Russians from Silistria, and their return across the Pruth, were steps taken by the Russian Government to conciliate Austria; and, that, from that moment (as stated by Lord John Russell in his despatch from Vienna, 16th April, 1855), we could no longer count upon her as an active participator in the war.

But Austria and Germany, although they are too wise and selfish to follow us to the Crimea, where their interests do not, as they think, beckon them, are yet, with regard to all the *future* objects of the war, as completely identified with us as when our Government summoned them to the first conferences. In fact they occupy, for the future, the diplomatic ground we wished them to take from the first. Austria has a treaty with Turkey, binding herself to make the invasion of the Principalities a *casus belli* against Russia. Prussia and Austria have a treaty, making it also an act of war against them if Russia pass the Balkan: and Prussia and Germany have engaged to defend Austria, if she should be attacked by Russia. Here we have these powers committed to the object we profess to have in view—not exactly in our way: a little more complex, and somewhat slower in execution: but still, substantially, nearly all we want. But more important still, at the close of the last Vienna Conference, Austria offered to enter into a tripartite treaty with France and England, binding herself by a positive engagement (which she never proffered to do before), to resist, in future, any attack made by Russia upon Turkey, or any attempt to maintain an exaggerated naval force in the Black Sea; and it was this offer, I have no doubt, made at the very close of the negotiations, which converted M. Drouyn de

Lhuys and Lord John Russell to the cause of peace. Now, here are grounds for believing that, for the *future*, Germany may be reckoned upon by Western Europe as a bulwark against Russian aggression. It is thither that I should direct my diplomacy, if I were in the position of our Government, and shared their fears for the safety of Europe. Let them try to condense the various and complicated engagements to which I have alluded, into one simple treaty of the whole of Germany. There may be a difficulty in convincing its Governments, or people, of the reality of the danger which so alarms us. Hitherto, I believe, the Teutonic family have been in no fear of being absorbed by the Slavonic race. Their traditions and experience point towards France, rather than Russia, as a source of danger. *Their defensive fortifications are on the Rhine, not the Niemen.* But let our Government point out to this intelligent people the grounds of their alarm, and if they be deemed well-founded, there is quite as much love of "fatherland" to reckon upon for repelling an invasion in Germany as in any part of Europe.

4. But we talk of this as a war which effects the interests of all Europe; and we hear the phrases "Balance of Power" and International Law," frequently repeated, as though we were enforcing the edicts of some constituted authority. For a century and a half we have been fighting, with occasional intermissions, for the Balance of Power, but I do not remember that it has ever been made the subject of peaceful diplomacy, with a view to the organisation of the whole of Europe. Now, if such a pact or federation of the States of Europe as is implied by the phrases "Balance of Power" or "International Law," should ever be framed, it must be the work of peace, and not of war. In the present case, our Government has entered into war on the assumption that the European balance has been, and still is, endangered by the ambition of Russia. Has the rest of Europe ever been, as a whole, consulted in a time of peace, and in a deliberate manner, upon this danger, and

invited to take a part in averting it? If not, what shall we say of our Government, or our governing class, or diplomacy in general? Now, assuming again that I occupied the position of our Government, and were in earnest in my fears for Europe, and attached a real meaning to those phrases just quoted, I should appeal not only to Germany, but to all the States, small as well as great, of the Continent, for such a union as would prevent the possibility of any act of hostility from the common enemy. This is the work of peace; and to this end, with the views and responsibilities of the Government, I should address myself. If I found that I failed to impart my apprehensions to the other nations of Europe—if they declined to form part of a league, or confederation against Russian encroachments, I should be disposed to reconsider my own views on the subject, and to doubt whether I might not have been led away by an exaggerated alarm. In that case, at least, I would forego the quixotic mission of fighting for the liberties of Europe, and pursue a policy more just towards the interests, and more consistent with the prosperity of the people whose welfare I was more especially charged to promote.

Finally. Not to incur the charge of vagueness, I would not risk the life of an Englishman, or spend another shilling, for the chance of the barren triumph of extorting pacific pledges from the Russian Government; and having come to this determination, there would no longer be an obstacle to peace. But, whilst attaching no value to the limitation of the number of Russian ships, exclusively, I should not lose sight of the policy of dealing with the amount of naval force as an European question. England and France will find themselves with more powerful navies at the close of the war, than were ever before possessed by two allied powers, a state of things from which embarrassments may possibly arise in more than one direction. This naval armament has already roused the susceptibilities of the United States, and led to an augmentation of their navy. Hitherto that country has not entered into rivalry with the



States of Europe, in their military and naval establishments. But, impelled by feelings of insecurity, or pride, the public sentiment appears to be undergoing a change as regards the navy. Should this spirit acquire strength in the mind of the nation, and reconcile it to the expense, there is no country in the world that in the course of a few years would be their equal at sea. Little more than twenty years hence their population will reach fifty millions, and their wealth is increasing in a far more rapid ratio. Is it wise on the part of the nations of the old world, placed at such a disadvantage by their colossal debts, and the necessities they are under for keeping large standing armies, to fasten on themselves a hostile naval rivalry with this transatlantic people? To abate such an impolitic provocation, as well as in the interests of European peace and prosperity, I would endeavour to promote a general reduction of naval establishments at the close of the war. Russia has been sometimes cited, heretofore, as an obstacle to such a policy; but after the abortive, nay, ridiculous exhibition which her huge navies have afforded to the world, during the present war: the utter want of confidence and enterprise displayed by them, from the moment that a hostile force appeared on her coasts; and which has more than justified the prediction that in six months she would, in case of a war with England, or any other maritime nation, be "crumpled up" as a naval power: after such proofs of the folly of attempting to become a first-class power at sea, without the possession of a mercantile marine, the Government of Russia would, I should expect, be the first to embrace an honourable pretence for voluntarily limiting her naval armament within the most moderate and economical dimensions.

I should endeavour, then, on the advent of peace, to promote, as far as possible, an approximation on the part of the European powers to the naval standard of the United States—the country possessing the greatest amount of mercantile tonnage. Should the close of the war be signalised by such a

general reduction of warlike armaments in Europe as would be involved in this arrangement, it would in all human probability confer a lasting benefit on posterity; and amidst the crimes and errors of the last two years, diplomacy might fairly claim for such a peaceful triumph the respect and gratitude of mankind.

# THE THREE PANICS:

AN HISTORICAL EPISODE.

## NOTE.

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THE last of the series of pamphlets which emanated from the pen of Mr. Cobden, at intervals during a period of twenty-five years, was published in 1862—six editions in all being issued from the press. No exposure of the humiliating and groundless panics by which the peace of two great nations was almost periodically threatened, and a wise and economic system of naval administration rendered impossible, could have been rendered more complete or more irrefragable. Based as many of its facts and figures were upon the full and accurate information to which Mr. Cobden had access during his somewhat protracted residence in France, as the negotiator of the commercial treaty, he occupied ground which was simply unassailable. A French translation was published in Paris under the auspices of his friend M. Chevalier, the eminent political economist, who has done so much to promote a free trade policy in his own country. Mr. Cobden was strongly convinced that if the English and French Governments met each other in the spirit which characterised the negotiations in which he bore so conspicuous a part, a mutually satisfactory arrangement might be entered into for putting an end to that mischievous rivalry of armaments which has been the bane of the two countries. His views were embodied in the Appendix to this Pamphlet; and although the voice and the pen of this “international man” can no longer speak to the world, to whose service his life was given, who will say that this great idea will not one day take root?

Years.	Expenditure of the English and French Navies, from 1835 to 1859 inclusive.		Expenditure for Wages in the English and French Dockyards during the same period.		Number of Seamen maintained in the two Navies.		Number of Vessels in Commission in the French Navy.	Years.
	English.	French.	English.	French.	English.	French.		
1835	4,245,723	2,227,709	376,377	343,032	26,041	16,628	165	1835
1836	4,533,543	2,439,445	373,996	358,664	30,195	21,685	171	1836
1837	4,788,761	2,351,949	472,870	264,508	31,289	23,812	186	1837
1838	4,811,990	2,567,092	474,943	276,752	52,028	24,500	198	1838
1839	5,197,511	2,790,928	495,489	314,593	34,857	25,457	218	1839
1840	5,824,074	3,540,051	557,053	384,197	37,665	33,107	228	1840
1841	6,805,351	4,542,495	610,007	436,368	41,389	40,171	227	1841
1842	6,818,173	4,665,617	607,008	481,656	43,105	36,416	225	1842
1843	6,382,990	3,624,929	629,441	410,761	40,229	31,345	213	1843
1844	6,250,120	3,888,121	691,184	358,271	38,343	30,240	219	1844
1845	6,943,720	3,847,498	732,625	369,772	40,084	28,979	233	1845
1846	7,803,465	4,507,427	796,147	436,243	43,314	33,970	243	1846
1847	8,013,873	5,145,900	853,574	448,333	44,969	32,169	240	1847
1848	7,922,287	4,985,872	890,626	444,085	43,978	28,760	242	1848
1849	6,942,397	3,923,276	805,507	456,155	39,535	27,063	211	1849
1850	6,437,883	3,406,866	726,956	432,837	39,093	24,679	181	1850
1851	5,849,917	3,293,737	712,372	416,773	38,957	22,316	166	1851
1852	6,625,944	3,462,271	702,260	425,811	40,451	25,016	175	1852
1853	6,640,596	3,967,838	719,214	467,898	45,885	28,513	192	1853
1854	12,182,769	7,115,417	968,608	688,418	61,457	48,812	254	1854
1855	19,014,708	8,702,758	1,172,800	830,570	67,791	54,479	322	1855
1856	16,013,995	8,330,690	1,301,077	776,356	60,659	40,882	310	1856
1857	10,390,000	5,070,304	937,773	636,776	53,919	29,289	215	1857
1858	10,029,047	5,337,060	991,592	640,954	55,883	29,602	199	1858
1859	11,072,243	8,333,933	1,582,112	772,931	72,400	38,470	300	1859*

\* The Year of the war in Italy.

# THE FIRST PANIC.

1847—1848.

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As the question involved throughout these pages turns mainly upon the comparative strength of the English and French navies, the reader's attention will be frequently solicited to the preceding tables of naval expenditure, &c., in the two countries. They comprise :—

1. Accounts, in parallel columns, of the total yearly expenditure on the English and French navies, for the twenty-five years from 1835 to 1859.

2. Accounts of the expenditure, during the same period, for wages in the English and French dockyards.

3. Lists of the numbers of seamen maintained in the two navies in each year for the same time.

There is also a list of the number of vessels in commission in each year during the same period in the French navy, for which there is no parallel list available in the English accounts.

It should be understood, however, that a comparison of the total expenditure in the two countries, *for any one year*, would be a very unfair test of the cost or strength of their respective navies. There are several very large items charged in the British navy estimates, as, for instance, the half-pay and pensions, which are found under other heads in the finance accounts of France. On the contrary, there are some smaller sums charged to the navy in France, which come under other categories of expenditure in England. The chief use of this table is to furnish an unbroken comparison of the *progress* of expenditure in the two countries during a series of years ; and, with this view, the accounts of the Ministry of the Colonies,

in which some changes have taken place to break the continuity, have been omitted.

For comparing the naval expenditure of the two countries for any one year, especially in what a French writer has called the "aggressive" outlay, a more accurate test is afforded by the second table, giving the amounts expended for wages in their respective dockyards.

But the truest comparison of the strength or cost of the two navies, in any given year, is afforded by the numbers of the seamen. The official representatives of the Admiralty in the House of Commons have always laid down the rule, that the vote for men is decisive of the whole amount of expenditure. In the words of the highest authority of our day: "It has been well ascertained with respect to the naval branch, and still more with respect to the other branches of our defensive force, that the number of men rules the amount of money voted on all the other branches of the various estimates." \* Again, in a Report laid before Parliament, on the "Comparative State of the Navies of England and France," † to which further allusion will be made, it is stated: "But as, in the case of the Army Estimates, nearly every vote is affected by the number of men; so, in the Navy Estimates, it will be found that almost every vote is influenced by the same consideration; as an increase in the number of seamen involves a corresponding increase in the force of ships, in the expense of bringing them forward and fitting them for service, and providing for wear and tear."

Before proceeding, it may be well to meet an objection. It has been said in the House of Commons, ‡ that the French public accounts are unreliable. That the *estimates* of the expenditure for the different ministerial departments are less reliable in France than in this country, is universally admitted.

\* Sir James Graham, *Hansard*, cxxiv. 312.

† *Par. Pap.*—182—1859.

‡ Mr. Bentinck, *Hansard*, clxi. 1765.

This arises from two causes : the facility with which supplementary credits have been granted by the Executive—a privilege which has recently been renounced by the Emperor ; and from the circumstance that the Estimates are prepared a year in advance of ours. For instance, our Navy Estimates for 1862 are prepared in December 1861, while in France the same progress is going on for 1863. Hence, when the war between France and Austria broke out, in the spring of 1859, as the navy expenditure for that year had been fixed in December 1857, it followed necessarily that all the expenses for that war had to be met by supplementary credits.

But it must not be inferred that no record is kept of those supplementary expenses. Every *franc* is inserted in the *Bulletin des Lois*, and afterwards appears in the *Réglement définitif des Budgets*. Each item is allocated to the various ministries, and the *Compte Général des Finances* comprises absolutely every one of those items. Had it not been so, how could M. Fould, in his late programme, have exhibited the exact amount of the difference between the estimates and the expenditure over a long series of years ? Ought not the recent unfavourable *exposé* of French finance to satisfy the most sceptical that those in power have not the unchecked control of the public accounts ?

The system of public accounts in France is the most exact in principle, and the most rigidly sustained in practice, in the whole world ; and, as the Auditors (*La Cour des Comptes*) are irremovable judges, an error or a fraud is all but impossible. But it requires a delay of more than a year to obtain the audited accounts, and hence the above tables are only brought down to 1859.

There is one other point requiring a preliminary observation. It might be supposed, from the tone frequently assumed by our officials, when speaking in the House on the subject of the navy of France, and from the pretended revelations which sometimes appear in a portion of the public press, that the



Government of that country is in the habit of taking sudden and secret resolutions respecting its naval armaments. So far is this from being the case, that everybody acquainted with the subject knows that the French are far more open than ourselves in discussing and defining, publicly, beforehand, the amount and character of their naval force. With us the inquiries of Committees of Parliament, or Royal Commissions, are confined to the details of administration; they are restrained from considering and pronouncing an opinion on the *amount* of force to be kept up on the plea that that is the prerogative of the Sovereign, to be exercised on the responsibility of the Cabinet. Not so in France, where commissions appointed by the chambers or the crown discuss the future strength and reorganisation of the navy for many years to come, and the result of their deliberations, with their recommendations, is published to the world.

It must not, however, be supposed that these plans are always carried to completion, for no country, perhaps, produces a greater number of abortive paper projects than France; but the Government more frequently falls short of than exceeds the recommendations of the committees. For instance, at the present moment the French Government is regulating its expenditure under the chief heads of its naval budget by an Imperial decree of 1857, issued in consequence of the report of a special commission appointed in 1855, and which fixed the outlay for fourteen years; but it is certain that new discoveries in naval architecture, if not the state of the finances, will lead to a modification of this programme.

There is something very puerile in the recent attempts to frighten the country with stories about secret preparations in the French dockyards. It would be just as possible to build a great hotel in secrecy in Paris as to conceal the process of constructing a ship of war at Toulon or Cherbourg. Such tactics on the part of the alarmists are novel, and not complimentary to the intelligence of the public. The subject was treated with

greater candour formerly. In introducing the Navy Estimates in 1839, Mr. Wood (now Sir Charles Wood),\* the Secretary of the Admiralty, said: "The French annual estimates contain the fullest information. The French carry publicity to a fault. They carry it, as Sir John Barrow has mentioned in his late *Life of Lord Anson*, to their own detriment. There is no disguise about the state of their navy." †

In comparing the expenditure of the two countries it will be observed that they almost invariably rise and fall together. In the long run this must be the case, because it has always been the recognised policy of the Governments to preserve a certain relation to each other. Looking back for nearly a century we shall find that in the time of peace France has been accustomed to maintain a naval force not greatly varying from the proportion of two-thirds of our own. If, however, we turn to the tables on the first page we shall find that in 1840-41 this proportion underwent a great and sudden derangement, and that, instead of being content with two-thirds of our force, the French navy approached almost to an equality with our own. Though remotely antecedent this incident is not wholly unconnected with the first panic.

It was under these circumstances that Sir Robert Peel's Government was formed in 1841. The earliest utterances of that statesman in the House of Commons when at the head of a large Conservative majority, indicated the line of policy which he was desirous of pursuing. "Is not the time come," said he, "when the powerful countries of Europe should reduce those military armaments which they have so sedulously raised? Is not the time come when they should be prepared to declare that there is no use in such overgrown establishments? What is the advantage of one power greatly increasing its army and navy? Does it not seem that other powers will follow its example? The consequence of this must be that no increase of relative strength will accrue to any one power; but

\* [Created Viscount Halifax in 1866.]

† *Hansard*, xiv. 1219.

there must be a universal consumption of the resources of every country in military preparations. They are, in fact, depriving peace of half its advantages, and anticipating the energies of war whenever they may be required." And he thus proceeds to indicate a practical policy to the civilised world. "The true interest of Europe is to come to some one common accord so as to enable every country to reduce those military armaments which belong to a state of war rather than of peace. I do wish that the councils of every country (or that the public voice and mind if the councils did not) would willingly propagate such a doctrine." \*

The more than official earnestness of these remarks leaves no room to doubt that the speaker yearned for the opportunity of carrying into effect his peaceful and cosmopolitan policy. But the relations of England and France were at that moment peculiarly unfavourable to his views. During the previous year, whilst his political opponents were still in power, and when M. Thiers was at the head of the French Government, the great diplomatic rupture had occurred between the two Governments on the Eastern question, the effects of which have descended in increased armaments to the present time. Two rival statesmen, who wielded with consummate skill the combative pride and the soaring vanity of these great nations, had encountered each other on the shores of Syria, where France was especially sensitive to defeat and loss of influence. The consequence was a deep popular irritation and sense of humiliation throughout the French nation.

It was under such circumstances that these two statesmen, passing from office into opposition, became from 1841 the persistent advocates in their respective countries of a policy that led to constant increase of armaments. The genius of both belonged less to the present than to the past. The one revelled in the historical glories of the First Empire, exulted in being the author of the fortifications of Paris, talked of 800,000

\* *Hansard*, lix. 403-4.

soldiers for a peace establishment, and forced upon successive Governments the increase of the navy. The other inherited the traditions of Pitt, saw in our great neighbour only the aggressive and warlike foe of our fathers, and urged on the vexed and unwilling ear of Sir Robert Peel the construction of fortifications, the augmentation of the navy, and the re-organisation of the Militia.\* The following extract from a speech delivered July 30, 1845, might almost be taken for the utterance of 1860: "Now, sir, France, as I had occasion to state on a former occasion, has now a standing army of 340,000 men, fully equipped, including a large force of cavalry and artillery, and in addition to that 1,000,000 of the National Guard. I know that the National Guard of Paris consists of 100,000 men, trained, disciplined, reviewed, clothed, equipped, and accustomed to duty, and perfectly competent, therefore, to take the internal duty of the country, and to set free the whole of the regular force. Now, sir, if France were a country separated from our own by an impassable barrier, if she had no navy, or if the Channel could not be crossed, I should say this was a matter with which we had no concern; but this is not the case. In the first place, France has a fleet equal to ours. I do not speak of the number of vessels actually in existence, but of the fleet in commission and half commission, in both which respects the fleet of France is equal to that of this country. But again, the Channel is no longer a barrier. Steam-navigation has rendered that which was before impassable by a military force nothing more than a river passable by a steam bridge." †

These accents of mistrust and defiance were echoed from the Tribune of the Chamber of Deputies in the following year, when M. Guizot was compelled by his active and brilliant opponent to enlarge his project for increasing the navy:—"We pay England," said M. Thiers, "the compliment of thinking only of her when determining our naval force; we never

\* *Vide post*, p. 561.

† Lord Palmerston, *Hansard*, lxxxii. 1223.

heed the ships which sally forth from Trieste or Venice ; we care only for those which leave Portsmouth or Plymouth." \*

Although we have been in the habit of assuming, for the last ten years, that our naval ascendancy has been endangered by the policy of the successor of Louis Philippe, it was during the last eight years of that king's reign, and especially for a year or two subsequent to the Syrian dispute, that a serious effort seemed really to be made to rival us at sea. The vast projects for extending the dockyards of France, especially Toulon, arose out of this diplomatic rupture. It seemed as though the Government of that country sought to console the nation for the wounds which had been inflicted on its self-love, by enormous and costly preparations for future wars. But, since nobody now believes that the "Citizen King"—the "Napoleon of Peace"—ever contemplated a descent on our shores, it would be a waste of time to enter into lengthened details respecting the first panic, which terminated with his downfall. Some of the incidents which preceded that event have, however, exercised so much influence on the two succeeding panics, that they cannot be altogether passed over without notice.

At the time to which we are now more particularly referring (1845-6), the first of these great political delusions had acquired no hold on the public mind. The principal contribution to the first panic, previous to the publication of the Duke of Wellington's letter, was the pamphlet of Prince Joinville. It is difficult now, after a calm perusal of this tract, to understand how it could have been pressed into the service of the alarmists. It is filled throughout with complaints of the inferiority of the French navy, and offers not a few, probably unmerited, compliments to the superior management of England. Here are its concluding words :—"I have been obliged, in the whole course of this little pamphlet, to make my country undergo an afflicting comparison with a country that is advanced

\* Chamber of Deputies, 1846.

so much before it in the knowledge of its interests ; I have been obliged to expose the secret of our weakness compared to the greatness of British power ; but I should think myself happy if, by the sincere avowal of those sorrowful truths, I were able to dissipate the illusion, in which are so many clever persons, as to the real condition of the navy of France, and to decide them to ask with me those salutary reforms which alone can give our navy a new era of power and glory."

The feelings of irritation which had been kept alive by portions of the press, in the interests of certain political parties in the two countries, from the time of the Syrian difficulty, and throughout the dispute on the Tahiti affair, in 1844, now found fresh aliment in the rupture of the two Governments on the question of the Spanish marriages. It was in the midst of the alienation and suspicion with which the public mind regarded these proceedings of the French Court, that, towards the end of 1847, the Letter of the Duke of Wellington on our National Defences made its appearance, an event which led to an immediate "invasion panic," and furnished a never-failing argument to successive Governments for increased warlike expenditure. Nor was this the only evil produced by the letter. It unfortunately gave rise to a host of imitators ; for how could a military man, of whatever rank, be more patriotically employed than in following the example of the Commander-in-Chief, and proclaiming to the world the necessity for increased armaments ? And, unhappily, this task could only be accomplished by rousing the hostile passions of two great nations, by appeals to the fears and resentment of the one, and accusations of meditated violence and treachery against the other.

The public has never been fully informed of the circumstances which led to the publication of this famous Letter. In a pamphlet which appeared in France, just previous to the opening of the session of 1848, written by M. Chevalier, who had already devoted his accomplished pen to the cause of the

Anglo-French alliance, the Duke's letter had been treated in the character of an answer to Prince Joinville's publication. This drew from Lord John Russell an explanation in the House, on the authority of the Duke himself, in which he said that "nothing could have given greater pain" to the writer, "than the publication of sentiments which he had expressed confidentially to a brother officer." \* It was stated by Lord Palmerston, at a subsequent date, that the letter was written "in consequence of an able memorandum drawn up by Sir John Burgoyne." † Whoever gave it to the world must have assumed that it would possess an authority above criticism; otherwise, it contains passages which would have induced a friend to withhold it from publication. The concluding sentence, where, in speaking of himself, he says, "I am bordering upon seventy-seven years of age, passed in honour," affords sufficient proof that it was not intended for the public eye. The entire production, indeed, gives painful evidence of enfeebled powers. One extract will be sufficient; the italics are not in the original:

"I am accustomed to the consideration of these questions, and have examined and reconnoitred, over and over again, the whole coast from the North Foreland, by Dover, Folkestone, Beachy Head, Brighton, Arundel, to Selsey Bill, near Portsmouth; and I say that, excepting immediately under the fire of Dover Castle, *there is not a spot on the coast on which infantry might not be thrown on shore at any time of tide, with any wind, and in any weather*, and from which such body of infantry, so thrown on shore, would not find within a distance of five miles a road into the interior of the country, *through the cliffs*, practicable for the march of a body of troops."

Now, any person who has been in the habit of visiting Eastbourne and Hastings, knows that for half the year no prudent mariner brings his vessel within several miles of that coast, and that there is a considerable extent of shore where a

\* *Hansard*, xcvi. 909.

† *Hansard*, clx. 18.

landing is at all times impracticable. It may be safely affirmed that if any one but the Duke of Wellington had stated that there was any shore in the world on which a body of troops could be landed "at any time of the tide, with any wind, and in any weather," the statement would have been deemed undeserving of notice. The assertion, however, passed unchallenged at the time, and the entire Letter was quoted as an unanswerable proof that the country was in danger. To have ventured on criticism or doubt would only have invited the accusation of want of patriotism.

Few people now remember the incidents of the invasion panic which culminated in the spring of 1848. It was the first occasion on which the attempt had been made to terrify the public with the idea of a sudden invasion from France in a time of peace, without a declaration of war, and without the hope of conquest, or even the glory of honourable warfare. The theory degraded our civilised and polite neighbours to the level of pirates. And yet, so generally was it proclaimed by the London journals of the time, that the editor of that staid and philosophical print, the *Spectator*, drew on himself a remonstrance from his friend, the late Sir William Molesworth, in a letter dated January 17, 1848, from which the following is an extract:—

"You say that 'the next attack on England will probably be without notice; that 5,000 Frenchmen might inflict disgrace on some defenceless post; 500 might insult British blood at Herne Bay, or even inflict indelible shame on the empire at Osborne House!' Good God! Can it be possible that you—whom I ranked so high among the public instructors of this nation—that *you* consider the French to be ruffians, Pindarees, freebooters—that *you* believe it necessary to keep constant watch and ward against them, as our Saxon forefathers did against the Danes and the Nordmen, lest they should burn our towns, plunder our coasts, and put our Queen to ransom," &c., &c.



It naturally followed, since the greatest military authority had proclaimed the country in danger, that it should be the fashion for civilians in high places to echo the cry of alarm. Even the peerage, that body which views all other agitations with so much serenity, partook of the excitement. Lord Ellesmere published a letter, bearing at its head the motto, "Awake, arise! or be for ever fallen!" in which he foretold that, in case of an invasion, the Guards would march out at one end of the metropolis as the French entered at the other, and that on the Lord Mayor would be imposed the duty of converting the Mansion House into a place where billets would be found for the foreign army; upon which Sir Robert Peel drily remarked, that "he would defy the Lord Mayor afterwards to show his face in Cheapside."\*

It was under these circumstances that Parliament assembled in 1848. The Whig Government, which had succeeded to power in 1846, on the disruption of the Conservative party consequent upon the repeal of the Corn Laws, found themselves with a deficient revenue, arising from the late famine in Ireland, and great depression in nearly all branches of trade and industry. On the 18th February, Lord John Russell made his financial statement for the year. For the better understanding of what is to follow, it may be well to give his opening remarks on the state of the nation:—

"I shall proceed, sir, at once, by reminding the House that the year which has passed over our heads, or I should perhaps say, the period of the last eighteen months, has been one which, excepting cases of foreign war or domestic insurrection, is without a parallel, I think, in the history of this country. The changes and vicissitudes of prices—the difficulties of commerce—the panic which more than once prevailed—the extreme distress of a part of the United Kingdom—the extraordinary efforts that were made to relieve that distress—altogether affected the state of this country to a

\* *Hansard*, xcvi. 1074.

degree, that I believe it would not be easy to find an example of such distress in our history." \*

After alluding to the great increase that had taken place in the French navy, he proposed, in order to meet the necessity for increased defensive armaments, and in accordance with the advice in the Duke of Wellington's Letter, to re-organise the militia, and to slightly modify, without materially increasing, the regular forces. To cover the deficiency in the revenue, and to meet the increased charges for militia, &c., the minister proposed an addition of 5d. in the pound to the income-tax, thus raising it from 7d. to a shilling. The proposition, so far as concerned the increase of our armaments, appeared so moderate, when viewed in connection with the excitement that had reigned out of doors with respect to the designs of our neighbours, that it led Sir Robert Peel to remark—

"After the panic which prevailed in this country about a month since, I am glad to find the tide has ebbed so fast, and that the alarm on the subject of invasion has visibly abated. I was afraid the Government might have been unduly influenced by that alarm; and I am relieved when I learn that it is not intended to make any increase in the military or naval force."

But the budget met with no favour from any part of the House, and it soon became evident that the intended addition to the income-tax would prove fatal to the whole scheme. The proposed increase of expenditure for militia, &c., was denounced by the reformers, who demanded a reduction of the existing establishments; whilst it was still more ominous to hear Mr. Bankes, the representative of the country gentlemen, declare that "that was not the moment to talk of valour and triumph, but the time for reflecting how they could remedy the evils which pressed so heavily on the great mass of the community." †

Whilst the Government measure was still under discussion,

\* *Hansard*, xcvi. 900.

† *Hansard*, xcvi. 932.

a portentous event occurred in France, which, if it had not involved the gravest consequences to Europe and the world, would have imparted a character of burlesque to the closing scene of the first invasion panic. On the evening of the 24th of February, 1848, whilst the House of Commons was in session, a murmur of conversation suddenly arose at the door, and spread through the House, when was witnessed—what never occurred before or since, in the writer's experience—a suspension, for a few minutes, of all attention to the business of the House, every member being engaged in close and earnest conversation with his neighbour.\* The intelligence had arrived of the abdication and flight of Louis Philippe, and of the proclamation of the Republic. The monarch and his ministers—whose ambitious projects had furnished the pretexts for our warlike armaments; and the gallant prince—whose pamphlet had sounded like a tocsin in our ears, were now on their way to claim the hospitality of England.

Under any other circumstances than those in which the country now found itself, this astounding intelligence would probably have caused an increase rather than a diminution of the invasion panic. There was, indeed, a momentary effort, in certain quarters, to turn to account the apparition of the dread Republic, with all the grim reminiscences associated with its motto of "*Liberté, Égalité, et Fraternité.*" But the nation was too much harassed with its internal difficulties to listen to the suggestion of those who would revive the terrors

\* The writer of these pages was sitting by the side of the late Mr. Hume when the tidings reached their bench. Sir Robert Peel was on the opposite front seat, alone, his powerful party having been broken and scattered by his great measure of Corn-Law Repeal. "I'll go and tell Sir Robert the news," exclaimed Mr. Hume, and, stepping across the floor, he seated himself by his side, and communicated the startling intelligence. On returning to his place, he repeated, in the following words, the commentary of the ex-minister:—"This comes of trying to carry on a Government by means of a mere majority of a Chamber, without regard to the opinion out of doors. It is what these people (pointing with his thumb over his shoulder to the protectionists behind him) wished me to do, but I refused."

of an invasion. Bad as had been the condition of the country, it was now felt that there was a worse state of things impending, from the destruction of confidence, the suspension of trade, and the interruption to labour, which the revolutions, now spreading over the Continent, were sure to produce. Public meetings were called; men of influence, of different political parties, mingled on the same platform, to denounce the increase of taxation, to repudiate the desire for the Militia, or any other addition to the defensive armaments of the country, and to call for a reduction of the public expenditure. Petitions, in this sense, poured into the House, the Government took the alarm, and, on the 28th February, the Chancellor of the Exchequer withdrew the budget for amendment. The Militia Bill was heard of no more for four years. A Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to examine into the Military and Naval expenditure, with a view to greater economy in the Estimates. Before the close of the session, considerable reductions were announced. The Income-tax remained at its previous amount of 7*d.* in the pound for the remainder of the year; and, on the meeting of Parliament in 1849, notwithstanding that a Bonaparte had just previously been elected President of the French Republic, and that the Continent generally was in a state of revolutionary disquiet, the Queen's Speech contained the following announcement:—

“The present aspect of affairs has enabled me to make large reductions on the Estimates of last year.”

The advocates of a system of direct taxation may profit by the admission: there can be no doubt that the proposal to add 5*d.* in the pound to the Income-tax mainly contributed to put an end to the first invasion panic.

# THE SECOND PANIC.

1851—1852—1853.

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IN ordinary years, when nothing occurs to concentrate public attention on this branch of the budget, it will be observed that the expenditure on the "Services" has a tendency to increase in proportion to the prosperity of the country.\* Taking the amount of our foreign trade as the test of the progress of the nation, we shall find, looking back over the last ten or twelve years, that the amount of exports and the amount of Military and Naval Estimates have been augmented in nearly an equal ratio, both having been about doubled. It would seem as if there were some unseen power behind the Government, always able, unless held in check by an agitation in the country, to help itself to a portion of the national savings, limited only by the taxable patience of the public. A combination of circumstances, however, counteracted this tendency at the period to which we are now referring, the most influential of which was that "the landed interest was in a dissatisfied and uneasy state from anticipations of the great change in the commercial policy

\* "I have observed that there is always a great deal of pressure for an increase of the army and navy, and a great complaint about the defencelessness of the country, whenever there is a surplus income over expenditure. Why, it is a tempting thing, a large heap of money at the table of the Exchequer, and the knowledge, on the part of the 'Services,' that if John Bull can be sufficiently frightened into the cry for increased defences, there is a very good chance of some of the money being divided among them and theirs. Now, they have an eye on the surplus at this moment. I have an eye also, on that surplus, which makes me peculiarly interested in this question. I want to apply it to the repeal of the taxes on knowledge; and, by spreading sound information among the people, to do something for their future happiness and prosperity."  
—*Speech of* RT. HON. T. MILNER GIBSON, M.P., *Manchester, January 26,*  
1853.

of the country, which was to come into full effect at the commencement of the present year"\* (1849). Moreover, the party which had been for many years engaged in the struggle for the overthrow of the Corn Laws threw its energies into the agitation for a reduction of expenditure, whilst the approaching year of the Great Exhibition tended to hold in check ideas of a warlike nature, and to make it the fashion, for a time at least, to profess a faith in the tendency of the world towards peace.

The consequence of this state of things was a constant reduction of the military and naval expenditure from 1847 to 1851, as will be seen on reference to the preceding tables. During this time, with the exception of the usual letters from Admiral Napier, in the *Times*, on the state of the navy, and a volume published at the close of 1850, by Sir Francis Head, on "The Defenceless State of the Nation," which was calculated to throw ridicule on the subject by its exaggerations, little was said about a French invasion. Even the Great Duke's letter was for a time forgotten. But only for a time: the occasion alone was wanting to revive the panic with increased violence. The country had been rapidly advancing to that state of prosperity in which its timidity and pugnacity seem equally susceptible of excitement. Under the influence of free trade and the gold discoveries, our exports, which in 1848 had been £52,849,000, amounted in 1851 to £74,448,000; they were destined to reach, in 1852, £78,076,000, and to rise in 1853 to £98,933,000; being thus nearly doubled in five years. The revenue was in a satisfactory state, and the landed interest had nearly recovered from the despondency into which it had been thrown by the repeal of the Corn Laws.

It was under these circumstances that the *coup d'état* of December 2nd, 1851, and the re-election of Louis Napoleon as President of the Republic, with augmented powers, furnished the occasion for the outburst of the second invasion panic.

\* *Annual Register*, vol. xci. p. 2.

From that day to the meeting of Parliament, on the 3rd of February, a large portion of the metropolitan journals teemed with letters and articles of the most exciting character. The course pursued by these writers was inconsistent enough. They commenced by assailing personally, with unmeasured invective, the author of the *coup d'état*, and heaping contemptuous epithets on the French people who had rewarded him with their suffrages ; and then forthwith they raised the cry of invasion, and proclaimed our defenceless condition—conduct which, as will be seen, drew on them the animadversions of the leading statesmen on the meeting of Parliament. At the same time there was the usual eruption of pamphlets, written chiefly by military and naval officers, containing projects for every variety of defensive armament.

In the debate on the Address on the first night of the Session of 1852, almost every speaker alluded with disapprobation to the inflammatory language of the press.

“I say that it is more than imprudent,” said the Earl of Derby, “that it is more than injudicious, that it is more than folly ; that it is perfect madness, at one and the same time to profess a belief in the hostile intentions of a foreign country, and to parade before the eyes of that very people the supposed inability of this country to defend itself ; to magnify the resources of your supposed assailant, and to point out how easy would be the invasion if not the subjugation of this country (though, thank God ! the most violent have not yet spoken of subjugation) ; but to speak of that invasion, accompanying it with details of the fearful amount of horror and bloodshed which, under any circumstances, must attend it, and then, in the same breath, to assail with every term of obloquy, of vituperation, and abuse, the public and private character of the man who wields that force which you say is irresistible.” \*

And again, speaking of the disposition of the President, he said :—

\* *Hansard*, cxix. 22.

“My Lords, I will go further, and I will say that I firmly believe that the French President personally is fully disposed to entertain friendly relations and to maintain a pacific policy towards other nations. But, my Lords, I think that if anything could divert him from that course—if he were a man likely to be worked upon by his own personal feelings—if anything were likely to divert him from that course of policy which I believe his inclination and his sense of the interests of France are likely to make him take, it would be the injudicious, and, I may add, unjustifiable language which has been made use of by a large portion of the public press of this country in commenting on the character of the French Government and people.” \*

In the House of Commons, on the same occasion, Lord John Russell, then Prime Minister, observed :—

“But really, to hear or read some of the letters, some of the language used by some portion of the press, one would imagine that these two great nations, so wealthy, so similar in enlightenment, were going to butcher one another, merely to try what would be the effect of percussion caps and needle guns.” †

Both these statesmen, however, afforded substantial justification to the alarmists whom they thus eloquently rebuked, by intimating their determination to “prepare our defences,” in order to make “invasion impossible.” The public, of course, attributed their language to diplomatic reserve, whilst their action was quietly accepted as proof of impending danger.

As we were destined during the year 1852 to witness the re-organisation of the militia, and an augmentation of our army and navy; and as the arguments by which these increased armaments were justified will be found to have exclusive reference to the danger of an invasion from France, it will be well to turn for a moment to the tables, and see exactly what the French Government had been doing since the downfall of

\* *Hansard*, cxix. 21.

† *Hansard*, cxix. 102.



Louis Philippe. Though it is rather beside the question—for we have never professed to match our land forces against those of France—it may be premised that the French army was undergoing some reduction, and that the National Guard, whose million of armed men had been referred to with such alarming emphasis by Lord Palmerston in 1845, was being rapidly disbanded, and was destined ere long to disappear, with the exception of a nominal force kept up in a few large cities.

A reference to the tables will show that, during the years 1849, 1850, and 1851, the period which intervened between the first and second panic, the strength of the French navy, whether measured by the total expenditure, the number of men, or the number of ships in commission, was considerably less than in any three years since 1840. It will be seen that the French expenditure, with the number of men and of ships in commission, both absolutely and in proportion to the British, was at the lowest point in 1851, the year which witnessed the renewal of the panic. These facts were stated at the time by those who resisted the increase of our armaments, and confronted the alarm of invasion; but their statements were discredited.

On the 16th February, 1852, Lord John Russell explained to the House his proposed Militia Bill. He alluded, at the outset, to his measure of 1848, the failure of which he frankly attributed to the necessity he was then under of proposing an increase of taxation. To demonstrate that he was not now acting under the pressure of the panic, he thus referred to the state of things under which he had formerly brought forward a similar project:—"At the time at which I then addressed the House, Louis Philippe was on the throne of France; there was no apparent revolution at hand; the disposition of that king was known to be pacific; his counsels were moderate and wise."\* This is an illustration of that curious feature in these political delusions, that we are always called on to forget them as

\* *Hansard*, cxix. 551.

soon as they have served the purpose for which they are created. A convenient veil is here drawn over the panic caused by Prince Joinville's pamphlet, the Duke of Wellington's letter, the Spanish marriages, the predicted flight of the Guards from London, and every other incident that had played its part prior to 1848. Lord John Russell now proposed a plan by which it should be possible to enrol for the first year not less than 70,000 men; in the next year, 100,000; in the third, about 120,000; with the possibility of increase to 150,000. But the Militia Bill was destined to be fatal to the ministry of which he had been Premier since the fall of Sir Robert Peel's Government in 1846.

A word of explanation is necessary to throw a light on what followed. During the recess of Parliament, Lord Palmerston, the Foreign Minister, had withdrawn from the Government. From the explanations which now took place, it appeared that, although there had been anterior differences between him and his colleagues, indeed between the Sovereign and her Foreign Secretary, the immediate cause of his retirement was the unauthorised expression of his approbation of the *coup d'état* of December 2nd, 1851. It was foreseen that this secession menaced the existence of a Cabinet already weak, and a few days only were required, after the meeting of Parliament, to verify this view. On the motion to bring in the Local Militia Bill, on the 20th February, 1852, Lord Palmerston carried an amendment for giving a more extended scope to the measure, which was followed by the resignation of Lord John Russell's Government, and the advent of Lord Derby to power.

On the first exposition of his views as Prime Minister, on the 27th February, the Earl of Derby spoke as follows:—

“My Lords, I believe that our naval forces were never in a better or more effective condition than at this moment. I believe that for all purposes, whether as regards the protection of our own shores, the defence of the numerous and distant colonies which form our empire, or for the protection of that

extended commerce which crosses every sea and fills every port in the wide world, I believe that, for all such purposes, our navy was never in a more effective state than it is now." \*

As soon as the new ministry were constituted, they prepared another Militia Bill, which was introduced into the House by the Home Secretary on the 29th of March. This measure met the approval of Lord Palmerston, to whose energetic support it mainly owed its success. He could almost, indeed, claim to be its author; for it transpired, incidentally, in the course of the discussion, that his frequent questions in the House, in the time of Sir Robert Peel's ministry, had had the effect of inducing them to prepare a measure for revising the Militia laws, but a change of ministry had prevented them from bringing it forward.† Lord Palmerston, moreover, in the course of the debates, identified himself more exclusively with the policy of the Bill, by stating that he had pressed on Lord John Russell, in 1846, the necessity of a similar measure.‡ To him, also, was left the task of finding arguments for the Bill; and it must be admitted that he fulfilled the duties of an advocate with a courage, at least, that could not be surpassed.

The reasons assigned by Mr. Walpole for introducing the measure, however ably stated, were so cautiously guarded by disavowals of any special ground for alarm, and so prudently seasoned with pledges for our peaceful foreign relations, that they were almost as good arguments for his opponents as for his own party; whilst the more general motives assigned, founded on vague and shadowy assumptions of possible danger, would have been equally indisputable if our existing navy had been ten times as efficient as it had just been declared to be by Lord Derby.

Lord Palmerston took a much bolder course. Falling back on his own idea of steam navigation having given an advantage

\* *Hansard*, cxix. 894.

† Mr. Sidney Herbert, *Hansard*, cxix. 587.

‡ *Hansard*, cxix. 575.

to our neighbour, or, to use his favourite phrase, having "thrown a bridge across the Channel," he now insisted on the practicability of fifty or sixty thousand men being transported, without notice, from Cherbourg to our shores in a single night. Such a declaration had not been before heard from one holding high rank in that House. It overleapt all reliance on our diplomacy, or our fleets; and, strange enough in one who had offered such eager congratulations to the author of the *Coup d'État*, the assumption of such a danger as this implied that our neighbour was little better than a buccaneer. But this hypothesis of sudden invasion is absolutely indispensable for affording the alarmists any standing ground whatever. Take away the liability to surprise, by admitting the necessity of a previous ground of quarrel, and the delays of a diplomatic correspondence, and you have time to collect your fleet, and drill an army.\* Admit the argument of suddenness of danger, and the only way of preventing your coasts and metropolis from being invaded by an army of fifty or sixty thousand men, is by being always prepared with an organised and disciplined force to repel them.

It was natural that such views should not pass unquestioned by intelligent professional men; among whom the veteran General who represented Westminster was prominent in showing the practical difficulties of sending large expeditions over sea, and in demonstrating that "the sudden arrival of a French army in this metropolis was simply an impossibility."† Here is a specimen of the undaunted courage with which Lord Palmerston set at naught the experience of the hero of a score of battle-fields:—

"My hon. and gallant friend (Sir De Lacy Evans) stated that, in collecting a large force for the purpose of crossing the Channel, such an extensive preparation must be made as would

\* "Give us a good stout man, and let us have him for sixty days to train him, and he will be as good a soldier as you can have."—*Evidence of LORD HARDINGE, Commander-in-Chief, before Sebastopol Committee.*

† *Hansard*, cxx. 1040.

give us ample notice ; but he is much mistaken with regard to the want of facilities which neighbouring countries possess for collecting together a formidable force and bringing it over to this country, without our having lengthened, or, indeed, even timely notice. The very ship despatched to convey to this country intelligence of the threatened armament would probably not reach our shores much sooner than the hostile expedition.”\*

The naval authorities in the House were also heard on a question in which the character and efficiency of their service were so much involved. Admiral Berkeley, who had been a Lord of the Admiralty under the previous Government, remarked that “Lord Palmerston had spoken of the French being enabled to raise 50,000 or 60,000 men in Cherbourg ; but he did not tell the House how these men were to be transported across the Channel ;” and the gallant speaker went on to say, “he would tell the noble Lord, the member for Tiverton, that it would take fifty or sixty vessels to embark those men he spoke of as being ready for action at Cherbourg, and it would take as many more vessels to protect them in the Channel.” He added, with a view to allay the “absurd panic that had lately run through the country,” that with an addition of 4,000 men and 1,000 boys to the navy, he would undertake to say that they would have a fleet of thirty steamers in the Channel, none of which would be under 900 or 1,000 tons, and that in the presence of such a force, he would defy any enemy to attempt a surprise ; adding, characteristically, that “he should like to see them attempt to disembark on our shores in the face of such a force.”†

Incidental to these debates was a motion made on the 30th of March, by Mr. Anderson (the head of the great Peninsular and Oriental Steamship Company), “to show how invasion might be rendered impossible,” in which he called attention to the Report of a Committee, appointed at his instance in 1849, which had recommended the Government to retain the services

\* *Hansard*, cxx. 293.

† *Hansard*, cxx. 1136-7.

of our numerous merchant steamers as a reserve force for the defence of our shores. He pointed out the great advantage this country possessed over all others in the number of its merchant steamers; that for every horse-power possessed by France, we had twenty (in sailing vessels our superiority in tonnage being only as five to one); he stated, from evidence before the Committee, that upwards of a thousand of these vessels could be made available in case of war, and pledged himself to produce a private tradesman who, for £200, would fit the largest steamer to carry the heaviest pivot gun; and he alleged that the private company with which he was connected could, alone, furnish vessels enough to form a line within signal distance of each other from the Channel Islands to the North Foreland.\* Mr. Anderson went into the subject with a thorough practical knowledge of all its details, and carried the House, as he had carried his Committee, with him. His motion was accepted by the Government, but never acted on.

This motion was, however, only an episode in that great debate of the session which reflected the panic that had been excited in certain quarters out-of-doors. In spite of the opposition of the Liberals and the Free-Trade party, the Militia Bill was passing through its various stages; and Lord Palmerston's theory of a nocturnal invasion, by a large army, continued to be the pivot of the debate. The weight of professional authority having gone so strongly against this theory, civilians were now encouraged to speak out; and Lord John Russell, towards the close of the debate on the second reading, remarked, with unwonted bluntness, that "he did not wish to be mixed up with those who entertained apprehensions of the sudden arrival in this country of 50,000 hostile troops in a single night, without notice of any kind being received in this country; or that we should hear of an army marching up to London without our having had any previous symptoms of hostility. Those were notions which were founded upon panic

\* *Hansard*, cxx. 369—379.

rather than on reasonable calculation." \* It was natural, too, that those members of the House who were identified with that body of British representatives residing at foreign capitals whom Burke has designated "licensed spies," should have revolted at such an imputation of want of vigilance on their part as was implied in this apprehended sudden invasion, and they found an ardent and eloquent defender in the present Sir Robert Peel, who had just previously withdrawn from the field of diplomacy.

"What, I should like to know," said he, "is meant by the term 'sudden invasion,' which is so often used, but with little consideration? The noble Lord, the member for Tiverton (Lord Palmerston), has defined it thus: 'We have to provide,' he says, 'not against a danger which may happen in six or eight months, but which may happen in a month or a fortnight, from the time when it is first apprehended.' I ask the House, and I ask the country, is it possible to admit this definition of the noble Lord? Let the House for one moment figure to itself the noble Lord sitting in Downing Street, with all the threads of European diplomacy concentrated, like so many electric wires, in his cabinet; and let the House then figure to itself the surprise of the noble Lord, on being told that that day fortnight 150,000 men were to be landed on the shores of Britain! Do you think the noble Lord believes this to be possible? Not at all." †

Following after nearly the whole of these speakers, and on the last night of the debate on the second reading of the Militia Bill, Lord Palmerston thus manfully stood his ground:—"The application of steam to navigation has in effect made a bridge over the Channel, and has given the means of quick attack—an attack on a scale of magnitude such as did not exist before. Again, it is said we should know beforehand, if any preparations were being made. I say you might not know, because, by the internal arrangements of railways, the

\* *Hansard*, cxx. 1000.

† *Hansard*, cxx. 1078.



animosity should have been revived. This feeling received a great impulse from what was occurring on the other side of the Channel. By a singular coincidence, the imposing national tribute of a public funeral in St. Paul's, on the 18th of November, 1852, was followed by the voting for the Empire in France on the 21st. The historical painter might have represented the third Napoleon rising from the yet open tomb of the vanquisher of the first! What wonder, if in some minds there was the irritating consciousness that all the great deeds of the departed hero had not borne permanent fruits? The feeling of apprehension, however, predominated. The traditional terror connected with the name of Bonaparte was revived; people began again to talk of invasion, and before Christmas the alarmists had more complete possession of the field than at any previous time.

On the 6th of December, 1852, Lord Malmesbury formally announced, in the House of Lords, the election of the Emperor of the French. He spoke in terms of the most unqualified confidence of the friendly and pacific intentions of the ruler and people of France. "I believe," said his Lordship, "that the Emperor himself, and the great mass of his people, deeply feel the necessity, for the interests of both countries, that we should be on a footing of profound peace; and, on the other hand, they see the great folly and crime which it would be on either side to provoke war. They must know that a war, as far as it would lead to the subjugation of either country by the other, is an absurdity; that neither country, so great, so powerful, and so independent, could in any manner subjugate the other, and that, therefore, war must be as useless as cruel, and as inglorious as useless." \*

Nothing could have been more satisfactory than this announcement, had it not been accompanied by a practical commentary elsewhere, which, in the eyes of the unsophisticated public, converted these excellent sentiments into hollow

\* *Hansard*, cxxiii. 975.



diplomatic phrases. On the very same evening on which this communication was made to the Lords, the Government proposed in the Commons an addition of 5,000 seamen and 1,500 marines to the navy, on the ground, as alleged by the Secretary of the Admiralty, that "the time had arrived when, with the most pacific intentions, it was absolutely necessary that we should put our Channel defences in a new position, and man the Channel with a large force."\* Had it been his studied purpose to furnish arguments to the alarmists out-of-doors, nothing could have been contrived more calculated to swell the panic cry of invasion than the tone of mystery and reserve with which the Naval Secretary deprecated all discussion on this vote :—

"He trusted that, if he should then decline to enter into any detailed information with respect to that vote, no gentleman would attribute such a course to a desire to treat him individually with discourtesy, but would feel that it was owing to *the determination at which the Government had arrived, after the most serious consideration, that it would be better, under existing circumstances, not to enter into any particulars with respect to that course.* He asked the present vote from the House of Commons, not as a vote of confidence in any particular ministry, but as a vote of confidence in that Executive which, whatever party might be at the head of the Government, must necessarily be charged with the defence of the country, *must necessarily be in possession of secret and important intelligence, and must necessarily be the fitting and only judge how far that intelligence ought to be communicated to the House.*"†

If anything could add to the mistrust in the public mind which this was calculated to produce, it was the readiness with which the leading statesmen on the Opposition side of the House accepted the doctrine of implicit confidence in the Executive. Sir Francis Baring, in expressing his approval of the proposed increase, remarked that "no one knew more than"

\* *Hansard*, cxxiii. 1006.

† *Hansard*, cxxiii. 1006—7.

himself how difficult it was to state the grounds for any increase. It was for the Government to state, on their responsibility, what they thought necessary for the service of the country, and he was not one of those who would oppose what they thought necessary." \* This doctrine, which, if generally acted upon, would be an abdication of one of the chief functions of the House of Commons, proceeds upon a double fallacy—first, in assuming that the Executive can, in these days, be in possession of secrets unknown to the public, respecting the warlike preparations or the political attitude of other countries; and, secondly, in assuming that, if the Government possessed any such secret information, there could be half as much inconvenience from disclosing it to the House of Commons as from the adoption of this principle of abject confidence in the Ministry.

The proposed increase in the navy was, however, carried without a division. An addition of 2,000 men and 1,000 horses for the artillery was also voted. There had been 3,000 men previously added to the army, and, as we have seen, power was given to the Government to raise 80,000 men for the militia—50,000 for the first year, and 30,000 more for the second. All this was achieved during their few months of office by the Earl of Derby's Government, who, so long as they were engaged in making these additions to our establishments, met with support from their opponents; but, that task achieved, thenceforth the benefit of implicit confidence in the Executive was no longer extended to them, and they were overthrown a few days afterwards in a division on the Budget, which was virtually a vote of want of confidence, and were succeeded by Lord Aberdeen's administration.

This increase in our armaments failed to allay, in the slightest degree, the agitation of the alarmists. It seems to be the peculiar characteristic of these panics, that they who fall under their influence are deprived of all remembrance of what

\* *Hansard*, cxxiii. 1013.

has been already done for their security. This state of mind is natural enough in those who embrace the hypothesis that we are in nightly danger of an invasion, without notice or provocation, by an army of 50,000 men. These persons do not employ their minds in discussing the probable grounds of quarrel with France, or in speculating on the chances of a rupture; but they assume the constant disposition for war on the part of our neighbour, as well as his complete preparation for attack. From the moment that such a theory of invasion as this is adopted, any plan of defence must necessarily be insufficient for security. It is to this state of mind that all the writers and speakers on the subject addressed themselves, as may be seen by a mere glance at the titles of the pamphlets which issued in unprecedented numbers from the press in the present year (1852).\*

The alarm was constantly stimulated by startling paragraphs in the newspapers. One day the French army at Rome was reported to be chafing and dissatisfied because it could not share in the invasion of England and the sack of London. The next there were whispered revelations of a secret plan, divulged by General Changarnier, for invading England and

\* The following are specimens:—"A Letter on the Defence of England by Corps of Volunteers and Militia," by Sir CHAS. JAS. NAPIER. "The Invasion of England," by an Englishman and a Civilian. "National Defences," by MONTAGU GORE, Esq. "A Letter to Lord John Russell, containing Suggestions for forming a Reserve Force," signed "GEORGE PAGET." "Memorandum on the Necessity of a Secretary of State for our Defence and War Establishments." "Proposals for the Defence of the Country by means of a Volunteer Force," by JOHN KINLOCH, late Captain 2nd Life Guards. "Defensive Position of England," by Captain CHAS. KNOX. "The Peril of Portsmouth," by JAS. FERGUSON, Esq. "A Plan for the Formation of a Maritime Militia," by Captain C. ELLIOT. "Observations on Commissariat, Field Service, and Home Defences," by Sir RANDOLPH I. ROUTH. "The National Defence of England," by BARON P. E. Translated by Captain J. E. ADDISON. "Thoughts on National Defence," by Rear-Admiral BOWLES. "Brief Suggestions on the Subject of War and Invasion." "Notes on the Defensive Resources of Great Britain," by Captain FYERS, Half-pay, Royal Artillery.

seizing the metropolis (which he publicly contradicted). Then we were told of a plot for securing a naval station in the West Indies. Next, the French Government had sent an order for steam frigates to Messrs. Napier, of Glasgow (which was contradicted on the authority of those gentlemen). There was a cry of alarm at the apparition of a French ship of war at Dover, which, it afterwards turned out, had been driven in by stress of weather. Then there were small French vessels of war seen moving about the Isle of Wight, to the surprise of some of our authorities, who should have known that the French Government are bound by convention to send cruisers into the Channel to see that the fisheries regulations are observed by their fishermen; and then came the old story of French vessels being seen taking soundings in our waters, though, as everybody knows, the most perfect charts of the Channel, published under the authority of the Admiralty, may be purchased for a few shillings.

But these little paragraphs, which flew from journal to journal, would have fallen harmless on the public ear if they had not been accompanied by alarming reports from "our own correspondents" in Paris of the immense increase going on in the French navy. Besides, there was the eloquent silence of our own Secretary of the Admiralty when he proposed the augmentation of our navy. What could that reserve and secrecy mean but something too frightful to reveal? True, the French army had been reduced by 50,000 men, and the National Guard was practically dissolved, but that did not concern us. What object could a Bonaparte possibly have in doubling the strength of his navy if it was not to attack England? To show to what an extent this delusion gained credence, let us quote from an article in that generally accurate historical record, the *Annual Register*, for September 21, 1852: "The French have been making gigantic efforts to raise their navy to a formidable strength;" and after entering into many details to show the large additions made to their fleet, the

article thus concludes: "Their navy seems to have doubled in effective strength within the two years of the Prince President's power."\* So strong were the feelings of suspicion, jealousy, and apprehension on this subject at the reassembling of Parliament in February, 1853, that Mr. Ewart, with a view of offering a public denial to these alarming rumours, took the extraordinary course of addressing a letter of inquiry to M. Ducos, the Minister of Marine, whose answer, which obtained general publicity at the time, is here reproduced:—

PARIS, *February 25, 1853.*

"SIR,—The questions which you do me the honour to put in your letter of the 19th of February might perhaps appear to me unusual if my mind really entertained the strange ideas which some persons appear to ascribe to me in England.

"But far from considering these questions indiscreet or inopportune, I rejoice at them, because they afford me an opportunity of giving you the complete assurance of my peaceful sentiments.

"I should consider it as the greatest of misfortunes if a serious misunderstanding should break out between the two nations, and I desire with all my heart that the best intelligence may continue to prevail between them.

"Your newspapers make much stir about our presumed warlike preparations. I confine myself to declaring to you that I have not armed a single gun-boat, stirred a single cannon, or equipped a single sailor. I remain the calm spectator of the enormous expenses which you are making to conjure away an imaginary danger, and I admire the facility with which you augment your Budget when no real necessity prescribes it.

"If the members of your Parliament who are so preoccupied with our projects of invasion would give themselves the trouble of paying us a short visit, they would be more surprised than I am myself, perhaps, at the extreme readiness with which the

\* *Annual Register*, 1852, p. 148, "Chronicle."

rumour (almost amounting to a pleasantry) of our supposed warlike preparations has been received among you.

"I thank you, Sir, for allowing me to establish a certain degree of intercourse between us, and I beg you to accept the expression of my most distinguished sentiments.

"THEODORE DUCOS.

"Monsieur Ewart, Membre de la Chambre  
des Communes, etc."

With M. Ducos the writer of these pages had not the honour of a personal acquaintance, but he happened to be on terms of very intimate friendship with one of his colleagues, with whom he was in correspondence at the time, and from whom he received the following note, which had been written to him by the Minister of Marine at the moment of receiving the letter of inquiry from Mr. Ewart. As this letter was penned by M. Ducos under circumstances which precluded any idea of concealment or misrepresentation, it will be read with probably greater interest than the more formal communication, especially that part which refers to the Cabinet device common to both countries of resorting to imaginary terrors as a means of swelling Budgets and strengthening majorities :

"MY DEAR COLLEAGUE,—Do you read the English journals and the debates in Parliament?

"Verily I am astonished at the din they are making on the other side of the Channel. Will you believe that I have just received a letter from a member of the House of Commons asking me seriously if the armaments we are preparing are destined for a war with England, and if we are pushing this constant augmentation of the forces of the two nations in a spirit of rivalry! I send you the letter, that you may not doubt my veracity. Will you answer it, or shall I?

"Our armaments! forsooth. What does it mean? You know as well as I that to this day we have not armed a poor little boat beyond our ordinary fleet. With a Budget reduced

by forty millions (francs) compared with the Budget of Louis Philippe, we are obliged to confine ourselves within the narrowest limits.

“England increases her Budget of this year by sixteen millions (francs); she forms her militia; she recruits her sailors; she makes her coasts bristle with heavy artillery. We look on tranquilly, without comprehending all these efforts, and without having for a single instant the idea or the apprehension that she is going to invade us.

“Mr. Ewart asks me in confidence, and whispering in my ear, if we are actuated by sentiments of rivalry in pushing our armaments! I declare that I cannot understand it. We have not armed one vessel, we have not touched one gun, we have not equipped one soldier, we have not recruited one cabin-boy: and they ask us seriously if we are a very thunderbolt of war! It seems to me, that the question might be more seasonably addressed to the members of the English Cabinet, who are covering themselves with armour, and *who possibly may not be very much distressed by these imaginary terrors (as we have sometimes seen among ourselves), inasmuch as they enable them to swell their Budget, and serve to strengthen a somewhat uncertain majority in Parliament.*

“Ah! my dear colleague, you see that all the geese do not come from the United States, or swim in the Seine. You perceive that the question from London makes me quite merry. Forgive me, my dear colleague. I conclude by asking whether I must write to Mr. Ewart, and tell him, for his great satisfaction, that I am a greater friend to peace than himself, and that I look upon war between France and England as a universal calamity, which every wise man ought to exert himself to prevent.

“THEODORE DUCOS.”

But this excellent attempt of Mr. Ewart to allay the public excitement produced no apparent effect. Nothing could surpass the childlike simplicity with which any of the above

absurd and improbable rumours respecting the hostile preparations of the French were believed, unless it were the stolid scepticism with which all offers to demonstrate their falsehood were rejected.

It will be well to turn for an instant to the tables in the first page, and bring the question of the state of the French navy at this time to the test of those authentic figures. Let us take the specific allegation in the *Annual Register* for 1852 (Sept. 21), that, during the two years of the Prince President's power, the French navy was doubled in effective force. Louis Napoleon was declared President of the Republic on the 20th of December, 1848, and was proclaimed Emperor on the 2nd of December, 1852. His term of presidency may therefore be said to have extended over the years 1849, 1850, 1851, and 1852. The following figures give the total expenditure, the amount of wages in dockyards, the number of seamen, and the number of ships in commission, for each of those years, and also for the two preceding years, 1847 being the last year of Louis Philippe's reign, and 1848 the first year of the Republic :—

	Wages in Dock- yards. £	Total Expendi- ture. £	No. of Seamen.	No. of Ships in Commission.
1847	448,333	5,145,900	32,169	240
1848	444,085	4,985,872	28,760	242
1849	456,155	3,923,276	27,063	211
1850	432,837	3,406,866	24,679	181
1851	416,773	3,293,737	22,316	166
1852	425,811	3,462,271	25,016	17

Taking 1851, the third year of the presidency of Louis Napoleon, when, it will be admitted, his policy must have had time to develop itself, and comparing it with the sixteen previous years comprised in the table given in the first page, it will be seen that there is only one year (1835) when France had so few ships in commission; only two years (1835-6) in



which she maintained so few seamen; and only five years (1835-6-7-8-9) when the total expenditure had been so low. And, instead of the effective force being doubled, it will be seen that a continual reduction had been going on during the first three years of the President's rule, with only an insignificant rise in 1852. The diminution in the dockyard expenditure was, in both countries, proportionately less than in the other items, owing to the more costly nature of the new naval constructions.

If we take the average of the four years 1849 to 1852, it will be found to be very much less than the average of the last ten years of Louis Philippe's reign; and, looking back over the tables of both countries for the whole period, it will be found that scarcely at any time was the French navy so weak, in comparison with that of England, as in 1851. M. Ducos, in the above private letter to his colleague, asserts that his expenditure was forty millions (£1,600,000) less than that of his predecessor in the time of Louis Philippe; and if we compare the year 1852 with that of 1847, it more than verifies his statement.

It is now very well known, apart from the proofs afforded by these figures, that, owing to the embarrassed state of the French finances during the Republic, and the struggle, involving the very existence of social order, then going on, very little attention was paid to the navy. A Parliamentary Commission, of which M. Dufaure was named "Reporter," was appointed by the National Assembly in 1849, to inquire into the state of the navy, and two goodly quarto volumes were the result, with minutes of the evidence and the discussions; but its proceedings were brought to an untimely end by the *Coup d'État* of the 2nd December, 1851, and they led to but few practical results.

It was under circumstances so little calculated to provoke our fear or resentment, that the cry of alarm and defiance was roused more loudly than ever through the winter and spring of

1852-3. Men of the highest political and social rank resigned themselves to the excitement. Two Cabinet Ministers, who had gone to their constituents for re-election on taking office in Lord Aberdeen's Government, were afterwards called on by their opponents in the House, to explain the violent language uttered by them at the hustings in allusion to the ruler and people of France.\*

"I tell you," said the Lord Lieutenant of Yorkshire, addressing the militia of that county, "the time is coming when everybody throughout this realm will have reason to be thankful that you have come forward to defend your hearths and homes."†

Lord Mount-Edgcumbe, through the columns of a public journal, thus added fuel to the flame:—"I have received positive information, which cannot be doubted, that the French are now striving to the very utmost to increase their naval force in every manner; and that arrangements have now been officially decided upon, to continue, year after year, similar exertions. I cannot give my authority, but trust that I shall be believed when I say that this information can be most thoroughly relied upon." And the writer adds, by way of emphasis, "I repeat that the information I have received, of preparations which can only be made for aggression, may be relied on."‡

At the same time, the strictures of the leading journals assumed a more virulent tone towards the chief of the French people. Such had been the withering influence of legislative restrictions and fiscal exactions upon the periodical press, that the publication of daily newspapers was restricted to the three capitals of the United Kingdom, and their circulation among twenty-six millions of people did not exceed, in the aggregate, sixty or seventy thousand copies daily. A monopoly of publicity was, indeed, virtually possessed by one London journal,

\* *Hansard*, cxxiv. 267.

† *Ibid.* cxxiv. 293, quoted.

‡ *Times*, February 7-12, 1853.

whose conductors had thus the power of giving the impress of public opinion to whatever views they chose to espouse. The columns of this paper now teemed with the most violent denunciations of the French ruler, not unmixed with expressions of contempt for the people of France. One writer\* of a series of impassioned invectives was betrayed into expressions not obscurely suggestive of assassination.

A reaction was at length produced in a quarter supposed to be peculiarly influenced by this journal. That part of the community most slow to enter upon any public movement, the merchants and bankers of London, convened, by circular, a meeting of those "who feel called upon at this time publicly to express their deep concern at witnessing the endeavours continually made to create and perpetuate feelings of mistrust, ill-will, and hostility between the inhabitants of the two great nations of England and France," and they took the unprecedented step of sending to the Emperor of the French a deputation of leading citizens, carrying with them an address bearing more than a thousand signatures.

On the meeting of Parliament, Mr. Disraeli took an opportunity of drawing attention to these manifestations of hatred and terror towards France, declaring that it was "extremely strange and startling, that, under such circumstances, an idea should have seemed to enter into almost every man's brain, and an expression into every man's mouth, that we are on the eve of a rupture with that country." And, alluding to the gross attacks that had been levelled at the ruler of France, he said:—"Remember, that all this time, while the French Government were quietly and diplomatically working with our Government for great objects of public benefit and advantage—that French Government were painted as corsairs and banditti,†

\* Letters of "An Englishman," in the *Times*.

† Take, as a specimen, the similitude of burglars, under which, when speaking of the danger of invasion, our brave and polished neighbours were described by a well-known writer of the day—a man of rank and a clergyman:—"When burglars are about we examine the scullery and cellar windows; we

watching to attack our coasts without the slightest provocation and without the slightest warning."\*

Such was the state of feeling in the spring of 1853. The nation had grown rich and prosperous with a rapidity beyond all precedent. Our exports had risen from £52,849,000 in 1848, to £98,933,000 in 1853, having nearly doubled in five years. History shows that such a condition of things is fruitful in national follies and crimes, of which war is but the greatest. The time is not yet, though it will come, when people will be able to bear the blessings of prosperity and liberty, with peace. Whilst it seemed only a question upon whom we should expend our exuberant forces—whether on France or some other enemy—we “drifted” into hostilities in an unexpected direction. The Turk was allowed to declare war for us against Russia, after we had agreed to the terms of peace offered for us on behalf of the latter country. Could this have happened amid the commercial depression and gloom of 1848?

The sudden change which was now to be witnessed in the temper of the public and the action of the Government was so unlooked for, and so utterly beyond all rational calculation, that it might be compared to the shifting of the view in a kaleidoscope. By way of bringing what took place clearly, and in the fewest words, home to the reader's apprehension, let us illustrate it by an individual case. Let us suppose an invalid to have been ordered, for the benefit of his health, to make the voyage to Australia and back. He left England in the month of February or March. The militia was preparing for duty; the coasts and dockyards were being fortified; the navy, army, and artillery were all in course of augmentation; inspectors of artillery and cavalry were reported to be busy on the southern coasts; deputations from railway companies, it was said, had been waiting on

try the fastenings of our doors, hang up bells to warn us, get dogs and police to watch for us, and go to bed in confidence that we are so prepared against an attack, that few are likely to attempt it.”—S. G. O., in *Times* (*Hansard*, cxxiv. 290).

\* *Hansard*, cxxiv. 263.

the Admiralty and Ordnance, to explain how rapidly the commissariat and military stores could be transported from the Tower to Dover or Portsmouth; and the latest paragraph of news from the Continent was that our neighbours on the other side of the Channel were practising the embarkation and disembarkation of troops by night. He left home amidst all these alarms and preparations for a French invasion. After an absence of four or five months, during which time he had no opportunity of hearing more recent news from Europe, he steps on shore at Liverpool, and the first newspaper he sees informs him that the English and French fleets are lying side by side in Besika Bay. An impending naval engagement between the two powers is naturally the idea that first occurs to him; but, glancing at the leading article of the journal, he learns that England and France have entered into an alliance, and that they are on the eve of commencing a sanguinary war against Russia!

Leaving our imaginary individual to recover from his surprise, it may naturally be inferred that he would feel some misgivings as to the prudence of placing ourselves at the mercy of a ruler whom he had so recently heard denounced as little better than a bandit and a pirate. It would certainly have required a much smaller effort of the imagination to have suspected a plot between our ally and the enemy, by which the two Emperors—having united their forces at Sebastopol, taken our army captive, and destroyed our fleet—should have seized on Constantinople and Egypt, and made a partition of Turkey, than to have believed in the possibility of an invasion by an army of fifty or sixty thousand Frenchmen in a single night, without notice or provocation.

No such doubts, however, seem to have troubled the minds of our alarmists. They who had been the most vehement in their denunciations of the French Government were now the strongest supporters of the Anglo-French alliance, and the loudest in clamouring for a war with Russia; and, for the next five years, no more was heard of a French invasion.

# THE THIRD PANIC.

1859—1860—1861.

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“WE must have one more war with Russia for the independence and freedom of Europe, and then all will unite in favour of a reduction of armaments,” was the language with which some friends of peace reconciled themselves to the Crimean War. They have since seen additions made to the permanent armed forces of Europe, equalling, probably, in numbers the armies engaged in the Crimean struggle. So true is the saying of Bastiat, that “the ogre, War, costs as much for his digestion as for his meals.”

It was formerly said of us, that we were a warlike, but not a military nation. The Russian War has gone far to make us both.

At the close of the great French War, in 1815, there were not wanting members of the Whig aristocracy, and a phalanx of distinguished popular leaders, to call back the nation to its old maxims against large standing armies in time of peace; and who not only kept alive the jealousy of permanent camps and barracks, but opposed the formation even of clubs set apart exclusively for the “Services,” and denounced the whole paraphernalia of a military organisation. *They* did not accept war as the normal state of mankind; nor did *they*, discarding all reliance on the spirit and patriotism of the people, attempt to drill them, like Russians or Austrians, into mere warlike machines.\* But at the termination of the Crimean War, the

\* The following is a specimen of the language in which our fathers were addressed by their great political leaders nearly half a century ago. And these were the sentiments of the Hollands, Miltons, Lansdownes, Tierneys, Broughams, Russells, and even the Grenvilles and Wellesleys, of those days:—“In despotic countries it may be necessary to maintain great armies as seminaries of

governing powers of this country seemed to be possessed but of one idea—how Englishmen could be drilled and disciplined into a state of constant readiness for future Continental

warlike spirit. The mind, which in such wretched countries has no noble object to employ its powers, almost necessarily sinks into languor and lethargy, when it is not roused to the destructive phrensy of war. The show of war during peace, may be necessary to preserve the chief skill of the barbarian and to keep up the only exalted feeling of the slave. The savage soon throws off habits of order; and the slave is ever prone to relapse into the natural cowardice of his debased condition. But in this mightiest of Free Communities, where no human faculty is suffered to lie dormant, and where habitual order, by co-operation, gives effect to the intense and incessant exertion of power, the struggles of honourable ambition, the fair contests of political party, the enterprises of ingenious industry, the pursuits of elegant art, the fearless exercise of reason upon the most venerable opinions, and upon the acts of the highest authorities, the race of many for wealth, and of a few for power or fame, are abundantly sufficient to cultivate those powers, and to inspire those energies which, at the approach of war, submit to discipline, and quickly assume the forms of military science and genius. A free nation like ours, full of activity and boldness, and yet full of order, has all the elements and habits of an army, prepared by the happy frame of its society. We require no military establishments to nurse our martial spirit. It is our distinction, that we have ever proved ourselves in time of need a nation of warriors, and that we never have been a people of soldiers. It is no refinement to say that the national courage and intellect have acted with the more vigour on the approach of hostility, because we are not teased and worried into petty activity; because a proud and serious people have not been degraded in their own eyes by acting their awkward part in holiday parade. Where arms are the national occupation, the intervals of peace are times of idleness, during which a part, at least, of the people must fit themselves for the general business, by exercising the talents and qualities which it requires. But where the pursuits of peace require the highest activity, and the nature of the government calls forth the highest spirit, the whole people must always possess the materials and principles of a military character. Freemen are brave, because they rely on themselves. Liberty is our national point of honour. The pride of liberty is the spring of our national courage. The independent spirit, the high feeling of personal dignity, and the consequent sensibility to national honour, the true sources of that valour for which this nation has been renowned for ages, have been, in a great measure, created and preserved by their being accustomed to trust to themselves for defence against invasion from abroad or tyranny at home. If they lean on an army for safety, they will soon look to it with awe; and thus gradually lose those sentiments of self-respect and self-dependence, that pride of liberty, which are the peculiar and the most solid defences of this country."

—SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH, House of Commons, February 28, 1816.



campaigns. Hence we have seen a military activity never before known in England in a time of peace, as witness the columns of the daily press, filled with "Military and Naval Intelligence." The object of those who, by their rank and influence, have mainly contributed to produce this state of things, has not been concealed. "What I want to see," said Mr. Sidney Herbert, "is a military spirit pervading all classes of the community; but especially the influential and intelligent middle class. I believe the Volunteer corps will effect that object to a large extent; and, therefore, if for that alone, I think they ought to be encouraged."\* The consequence has been, not only an enormous increase of our military estimates, but such an outlay for permanent barracks and camps as to imply a complete abandonment, for the future, of our old habits and maxims as a self-relying and free people. The unfinished works at Aldershot, alone, have already cost £1,421,153,†—an amount, for the time and purpose, perhaps unexampled in the world's history. Our business, however, must still be mainly with the navy.

At the conclusion of the war, a grand Naval Review took place at Spithead, which is thus recorded in the *Annual Register* for 1856, with the accompanying remark that the "steam gun-boats formed the novel feature of the review":—

"The vast naval force reviewed on this occasion, consisted of 22 steamships of the line, of from 60 to 131 guns, 53 frigates and corvettes, 140 gun-boats, 4 floating batteries, and 50 mortar-vessels and mortar-boats: the aggregate power of the steam-engines, 30,671 horses, and the number of guns, 3,002."

Addressing the House, May 8, 1856, after the ratification of the Treaty of Peace, Lord Palmerston said that "having begun the war with a fleet of comparatively small amount, we were enabled, at the end of the war, to present at Spithead the spectacle of such a fleet as called forth from the Earl of Derby the eulogy that 'no country ever possessed so mighty a naval

\* *Hansard*, clv. 699.

† *Parliamentary Paper*, No. 327, 1861.



armament.' We had, at the beginning of the war, a total force of 212 ships ! and at the end of the war we have 590."\*

The greater portion of this increase consisted of gun-boats and mortar-vessels ; and, with a view to a due appreciation of the systematic manner in which they are destined henceforth to pass into oblivion, when successive First Lords or Secretaries of the Admiralty introduce the Navy Estimates, it is necessary that we should fully apprehend the importance which competent judges attached, at the time, to this addition to our defensive armament. A few weeks later, the First Lord of the Admiralty himself, when alluding to the fact of these gun-boats having been completed too late to be employed in offensive operations against the enemy, remarked :—

"Happily, however, the means thus provided for attack can now be made equally available as a part of our permanent establishment for purposes of defence. The gun-boats and floating-batteries, recently constructed for other objects, will constitute a valuable and effective armament for protecting our shores from assault. The expense incurred in their equipment will, therefore, be money not ill-spent. I think it required the stern experience of war to teach us the value of such a force ; for I do not believe the House of Commons could have been induced, in a period of uninterrupted peace, to vote the additional funds requisite for creating it."†

"We commenced the war," said Captain Scobell, on the same occasion, "with only large ships ; and it was only after two years' experience that we discovered the gun-boat tribe. If, some time ago, we had had that magnificent fleet of gun-boats which had recently been reviewed at Spithead, something would have been done in the Baltic which would have been remembered for centuries."‡

Let it be borne in mind that we were at the close of a war in which we had destroyed the Russian fleet in the Black Sea, and, by the terms of the Treaty of Peace, had prohibited its

\* *Hansard*, cxli. 226.

† *Ibid.* cxlii. 1423.

‡ *Ibid.* cxlii. 1435.

reconstruction. The Russian power, in that remote region, had been hitherto invested with a certain mystery; and the fleet of Sebastopol had often, in the speeches of our alarmists, been made to assume mythical proportions. The Secretary of the Navy, in 1852, the year before the Crimean War, when seeking to justify his comparatively moderate expenditure for that year, appealed to the Russian force in the Black Sea, which, according to his statement, comprised 18 line-of-battle ships, 12 frigates and corvettes, and 19 smaller vessels.\* These ships were now lying sunk in the harbour of Sebastopol.

It was under these circumstances that, in proposing the Navy Estimates on the 18th of May, 1857, the First Lord of the Admiralty declared that he could hold out no prospect of being able to reduce the expenditure to the level of former years previous to the war.† This drew from the vigilant Mr. Williams the remark that they were the most extravagant Estimates since the termination of the great French War; and he added that “the Estimates for 1852-3, the last year of peace before the Russian War, were £2,175,000 less than the Estimates for the present year; and yet this was the second year of peace.”‡

The First Lord of the Admiralty proceeded to justify his increased estimates by a reference to the navy of our ally and neighbour:—“France,” said he, “had been paying the greatest possible attention of late years to the efficiency of her navy;”§ and in order to compare the forces of the two countries, he gave the number of the screw line-of-battle ships and frigates possessed by each, omitting the gun-boats and smaller vessels, in which we possessed an overwhelming superiority, and which had been described in the previous year as “a valuable and effective armament for protecting our shores from assault.” They were now alluded to only with the disparaging remark

\* *Hansard*, cxx. 382.

† *Ibid.* cxlv. 442.

‡ *Ibid.* cxlv. 417.

§ *Ibid.* clxv. 418.

that "no great naval engagement could be maintained in the middle of the Atlantic between line-of-battle ships and gun-boats." The comparison was stated as follows\* :—

Line-of-battle ships with screws, built and building, 1857.		
English, 42.		French, 40.
Frigates with screws, built and building.		
English, 42.		French, 37.

Lord Clarence Paget, who attracted attention by the ability and professional forethought which characterised his remarks on the comparative value of large and small vessels of war, took exception to the above figures, and said that he held in his hand a list of French screw line-of-battle ships furnished him by the Minister of Marine, and that they amounted altogether to 31 ; and he reminded the First Lord of a great omission in his statement—that the "nine screw block-ships, which he had omitted from his enumeration of British ships of the line, were among the most effective of our screw line-of-battle ships. They were the only ships that fired a shot in the Baltic, where the great line-of-battle ships were of no use whatever, and lay off looking on ;"† and he added that, taking into account these vessels, our force was nearly double that of France.

It may be well here to say a word or two respecting the origin and purpose of these block-ships, to which repeated allusion will hereafter be made. It was explained by Sir George Cockburn in the House, in 1846, that Sir Robert Peel's Government was induced, in consequence of the creation of a steam navy by France, to appoint a commission to visit all the ports, and see what was necessary to be done for their protection ; when it was recommended that a certain number of sailing line-of-battle ships and frigates should be furnished with screws, so as to be able to shift their position, and aid the different batteries if they should be attacked.‡ This was, in

\* *Hansard*, cxlv. 426.

† *Ibid.* cxlv. 438.

‡ *Ibid.* cxlv. 438.

fact, our first application of the screw propeller to ships of the line; and these block-ships were expressly designed for the protection of our naval arsenals, and the vulnerable points of our coast, against the steamships of our neighbour. But it will be curious to observe how systematically these vessels are ignored by successive First Lords and Secretaries of the Admiralty, in enumerating our naval resources, even when estimating our means of defence against invasion. The opinions expressed on this subject by the same statesmen when in and when out of office, will be found to present a singular contrast.

Lord Clarence Paget also called the First Lord's attention to the small vessels which he had forgotten, and declared that "he believed that, had Sir Charles Napier been supplied with gun-boats, he might have damaged Cronstadt very considerably. All his own experience went to show that line-of-battle ships were not now so important an arm in war as they formerly were. Formerly, line-of-battle ships carried heavier guns than other ships; but now every corvette, sloop, and gun-boat carried heavy guns; and he was convinced that no force of large ships could withstand the legion of gun-boats, sloops, and corvettes which they saw at Spithead last year."\* Again recurring to the subject, he said, "in his opinion line-of-battle ships were not the instruments by which in future the fate of empires would be decided;" and he proceeded to administer comfort to the alarmists, by showing how different our situation now was to our "case in the time of Napoleon, who had observed that, if he could only command the Channel for forty-eight hours, he would subjugate this country. He might, however, come to our shores at the present day with seventy or eighty ships of the line, and yet not be enabled to effect a landing in the face of that noble fleet of small vessels which the right honourable baronet had given us within the last few years." He added that "he had the best authority for saying

\* *Hansard*, lxxxvii. 1456.

that there was sitting at the present moment in France an *Enquête*, or Commission, the great object of whose inquiry was to ascertain whether line-of-battle ships were or were not the most efficient class of ships which could now be employed." And he advised the First Lord to "rest upon his oars and take the opportunity of consulting members of the naval service, before he proceeded to add to the number of those vessels"—\*—advice to which, unfortunately, it may be necessary to recur, when the noble lord is himself filling the office of official representative of the Admiralty in the House of Commons.

In reply to these remarks, Sir Charles Wood, the First Lord of the Admiralty, observed:—"The noble lord (Lord C. Paget) had said that the block-ships were the most efficient ships in the Baltic. It was true that, on account of their light draught of water, they and the gunboats were so in that case, *and that they would be so in the case of operations on our own coast*; but they would not be safe vessels to send across the Atlantic—they could not keep their place in a cruising squadron." †

In the course of this debate, Sir Charles Napier, referring to the comparative numbers of line-of-battle ships, as enumerated by the First Lord, but forgetting the block-ships and floating batteries, and overlooking the gun-boats and mortar-vessels which had been built at his own suggestion, thus raised the cry of alarm: "The First Lord of the Admiralty," said he, "had told the House that France had forty ships, and we had forty-two only. France was equal to us, therefore, in ships, but superior in the means of manning them. She had an army of 300,000 or 400,000 men, and we had but 20,000 in Great Britain. What would the consequence be if war were to spring up? Why, there would be an invasion immediately." ‡

A few days after, he thus improved upon this version of the official statement: "The First Lord of the Admiralty had told

\* *Hansard*, cxlv. 438—9.

† *Ibid.* cxlv. 450.

‡ *Ibid.* cxlv. 434.

them the other night—a thing which no First Lord had ever told them before—that France, in its naval steam power, was equal to ourselves, and that she was able to bring together any number of disciplined men to man her fleets quicker than we could. We were, therefore, no longer the first naval nation in the word.”\* A week later, the danger is more menacing: “Let the House look at our condition at the present moment. We had no Channel fleet. In a few months we should not have a line-of-battle ship in England; and, in case of a sudden war with France and Russia, he did not believe the Queen’s throne would be worth six months’ purchase.” †

The course pursued by this remarkable man towards the close of his career, and the great extent to which his writings and speeches contributed to the creation of the invasion panics, call for a few special observations. On his return to the House of Commons, after being superseded in the command of the Baltic fleet, during the Crimean War, he became possessed by a morbid apprehension, amounting almost to a state of monomania, respecting the threatened attitude of France, and our insufficient means of defence. It was not peculiar to his case, for it is common to all who share his delusion about the danger of an invasion, that he always lost sight of all that was already done, and called for something else as the sole means of security. Thus, he demanded more line-of-battle ships, and ignored the existence of the new force of small vessels; then he called for a Channel fleet, whilst he threw contempt on the block-ships; when the Channel fleet was completed, he declared that the crews were in mutiny from mismanagement; when the number of line-of-battle ships was so great as to extort from him expressions of satisfaction, he asked what was the use of ships without seamen; when the number of seamen voted for our Royal Navy exceeded that of the entire sea-going population of France, he called aloud for a reserve; and when he had been triumphant in all his demands, he reverted to the opinion,

\* *Hansard*, cxlv. 770.

† *Ibid.* cxlv. 966.

which he had been one of the first to proclaim, that the whole navy must be reconstructed, for that "a broadside from the modern shell-guns would tear holes in the sides of our wooden ships through which it would be easy to drive a wheelbarrow." \*

Simultaneously with these calls for defensive armaments arose incessant cries respecting the enormous increase of the French navy. France was always described as in a superior state of preparation, and always menacing us with invasion. To those who sat near him in the House, and shared in his conversation, he would sometimes almost predict the very month when the French might be expected on our shores.

Cherbourg had been always described by him as the chief source of our danger, until the great public visit to that port dispelled the phantom-ships with which he had been haunted ; but still he would expatiate on the facilities which its enormous docks and basins offered for embarking an army ; declaring on one occasion that "the troops could walk on board ; *cavalry, mounted on their horses, could ride on board* : and artillery could easily be shipped, for thirty sail-of-the-line could lie alongside of the wharves alone." † Notwithstanding that he drew on himself occasionally the censure of his brother officers for disparaging our naval strength, and was more than once rebuked for encouraging insubordination among the seamen, he still persevered ; and such is the force of reiteration, that he was at last justified in the boast that, although "he had been called an alarmist, and laughed at for many years on that account, he had lived to see his views adopted." ‡

The question had been asked, whether one whose antecedents had exhibited such reckless courage could have been sincere when raising the cry of alarm on such vague and shadowy pretexts, or whether he was actuated by mere professional motives. It was, however, impossible for those who were in the habit of conversing with him to doubt his earnestness ; and the fact of his having recommended an arrangement

\* *Hansard*, clvi. 1138.

† *Ibid.* cl. 1928.

‡ *Ibid.* clvi., 989.



between the English and French Governments for putting a limit to their naval rivalry\* is an answer to the suspicion of insincerity. The question admits, perhaps, of a different solution. On the occasion of his bringing his grievance before Parliament, and moving for an inquiry into his conduct in the Baltic, he was answered by Sir Maurice Berkeley, one of the Lords of the Admiralty, who stated, in his presence, that he had advised the removal of Admiral Napier from his command in the Baltic, because "he thought he was totally and physically unfit—that his nerves were completely gone." † This declaration, from sailor to sailor, was at the moment thought to partake of somewhat too much professional bluntness; but it probably offers the true solution of the above question. And this view is confirmed by the fact, that, to the last, on all matters connected with his profession, excepting where the question of invasion was involved, the remarks and suggestions of the naval veteran displayed much sagacity and sound sense.

Debility of mind, in one or other of its faculties, like physical decrepitude in some particular organs of the body, is the natural and inevitable accompaniment of old age. It has been observed, too, that, as in the present case, the very faculty for which a man has been most distinguished, may, by an excessive and continued strain, be the first to give way. This, whilst teaching us charity in weighing men's motives, should also induce us, when taking counsel in important matters, to prefer the judgment of those who are in the vigour of their powers, and to mistrust quite as much the timidity of the old as the rashness of the young.

The year 1857 passed without any revival of the excitement out-of-doors respecting our defences. Scarcely a pamphlet issued from the press on the subject of an invasion. Yet, if we look at the circumstances of the time, there could hardly be imagined a conjuncture when they who believed in the

\* *Hansard*, clvi. 989.

† *Ibid.* cxli. 102.



probability of an attack from the other side of the Channel ought to have been more on the alert.

The commencement of 1858 found us involved in a war with China, and in the midst of that formidable rebellion which threatened the overthrow of our dominion in India. Just at the opening of the parliamentary session of that year occurred the attempt on the Emperor's life, which led to some intemperate manifestations of feeling towards England, on the part of certain French colonels. This was followed by irritating discussions in the press. One of the first measures of the session was a proposal to alter our law of "conspiracy to murder," with the view of meeting the complaints from France. This conciliatory step led to the fall of Lord Palmerston's ministry in February, and to the return to power of Lord Derby, whose party was at that time considered less favourably disposed than their predecessors towards the French alliance. When we consider that, in addition to these personal elements of provocation, there was the temptation to wrest from us that Eastern empire which is regarded, however mistakenly, on the Continent, as the great source of our wealth and power, we have a combination of motives and of favourable circumstances to invite an attack, such as could never be expected to occur again. Well might Mr. Horsman exclaim, in the following year, that "when he looked back to their condition when the mutiny broke out in India, he must say it was fortunate that at that time it never entered into the mind of any enemy to take advantage of the position of this country;"\*—what a misfortune that so intelligent a mind should have failed to draw the only rational deduction from such a fact! Instead of taking advantage of our position, the Emperor's Government offered the facilities of a passage through France for our Indian reinforcements.

A complete calm prevailed in the public mind through the greater part of the year 1858; and the pamphlet literature

\* *Hansard*, clv. 691.

scarcely takes note of the topic of a French invasion. The House of Commons was not, however, so entirely quiescent. Lord Derby's Government, on their accession to office, had found the Navy Estimates already prepared by Lord Palmerston's administration, comprising an increase of about 2,000 men. These Estimates, with slight diminutions in the items for building and stores, were adopted and proposed to the House by the new First Lord (Sir John Packington) on the 12th April. In the debate which followed, there was the usual reference made, by Sir Charles Napier, Mr. Bentinck, Mr. Drummond, and others, to the formidable preparations going on in France, and to the risks of an invasion; when Lord Clarence Paget renewed the advice he had before urged, saying that "he believed it to be the opinion of the Navy that it would be wise to pause in the construction of these enormous vessels. That opinion was gaining ground in this country, and much more was it gaining ground in France. He had been lately in Paris, and had conversation with French officers on the subject; and whatever reports the late First Lord of the Admiralty (Sir Charles Wood) might have heard respecting the French Navy, he could give him positive information that, so far from there being any activity in building large ships, they were waiting to see what would be done in this country. He was persuaded, and it was the general opinion of the naval profession, that line-of-battle ships were not destined to play an important part in future naval wars. It was believed that these ships would be superseded in the line-of-battle, and more particularly in attacking forts, by ships with one tier of heavy guns, and their sides cased with iron. He believed with the hon. and gallant Admiral, the member for Southwark (Sir C. Napier), that in ten years three-deckers would be unknown, being cut down into single-deck ships; and, holding that opinion, he thought it was a wasteful expenditure of the public money to go on, year by year, constructing that class of vessels."\*

\* *Hansard*, cxlix. 929—30.

These views were controverted by Lord Palmerston, who alluded to the measures which the French Government were taking to give France a fleet of screw line-of-battle ships, very nearly equal to our own. He also spoke of Cherbourg as being "as large as many of our dockyards taken together;" and twitted Lord Clarence Paget with his credulity, telling him that he was "not sure that opinions coming from what must be called the rival service of other countries, were exactly the opinions by which the Government of this country ought to guide their conduct.\* He deprecated any reduction in the Estimates for building; and urged that "the most pressing application of the funds voted for the naval service was in providing ships, which when once built will remain, rather than in employing men, who, after the year is over, will not add to your strength next year, unless the expense is continued:" †—a doctrine which, as the recent transitions in our navy show, ought to be received with great caution.

These allusions to the preparations of our neighbours met with no response out of doors; and little more was said during the session,—with one constant exception;—Sir Charles Napier, on the 11th June, addressed a speech to the House, in the form of a long question to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the subject of our national defences, in which, among other terrors of the imagination, he pictured a Russian fleet coming up the Channel, and exclaimed, amid the laughter of the House, "what would become of the Funds, God only knew." ‡ The Minister, in reply, complained that he had had to listen to three speeches in the session, on the same subject, from the same speaker.

The year 1859 witnessed the apparition of the third panic. Towards the close of 1858, and up to the meeting of Parliament in February, there had been some efforts made, by a certain portion of the press, to excite apprehensions respecting the magnitude of the naval preparations of France; but they

\* *Hansard*, cxlix. 936

† *Ibid.* cxlix. 938.

‡ *Ibid.* cl. 1930.

produced little effect on the public mind. Unlike its predecessors, this panic had its origin chiefly in elevated and official circles. It was from the first a parliamentary agitation. Nor was it confined to the Lower House, for, as will be seen, the most successful agitators were those of the patrician order, who played with consummate skill on the most sensitive chord in the national heart by raising the cry of alarm for our naval superiority.

The Queen's Speech at the opening of Parliament announced an increase of expenditure for the "reconstruction of the British navy."

On the day previous to that fixed for the bringing on the navy estimates Sir Charles Napier rose in the House and said he "wished to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether it was true that a French steam *aviso*, with two French cutters, had entered Spithead a few nights ago; and that, after the exchange of a few words of courtesy, these vessels had proceeded to Stokes Bay in the night and taken soundings there? Also, whether he knew that these vessels had more than the usual complement of officers?"\* The reply was, of course, that they were employed in the performance of their duty in looking after the French fishermen.

Before we come to the proposal for a sudden and large increase of the navy on the plea that the Government had discovered in the summer of 1858 that the French were making extraordinary progress in their naval armaments, it will be well to recur for a moment to the tables in the first page. The following is an extract of the number of men, the amount of wages in dockyards, and the total expenditure for the navy in England and France for the year 1858:

	Seamen.	Wages, etc. Dockyards.	Expenditure. Total.	
		£	£	
England ...	55,883	991,592	10,029,047	1858
France ...	29,602	640,954	5,337,060	1858

\* *Hansard*, cliii. 771.

It will be seen that our total expenditure amounted to nearly double that of France, but owing to the difference in the modes of keeping the accounts in the two countries, as already explained, this is not a fair mode of comparison. The amount expended for wages in dockyards is a better test, and under this head the English expenditure is fifty per cent. more than that of France. But the truest standard of comparison is the number of seamen, of whom we had nearly double the French force. If we cast our eye back over the French tables we shall find that the number of men maintained in 1847, the last year of the reign of Louis Philippe, amounted to 32,169, or 2,567 more than in 1858. The average number of the French navy for the last ten years of Louis Philippe's reign was 31,335, or 1,733 more than in 1858. It will be seen also that the number of ships in commission in the latter years of the monarchy exceeded those of 1858. On the other hand, looking back over the British accounts, we shall find no year previous to the Crimean war in which our seamen approached within 10,000 of the number voted for 1858. And, more important than all, it will be seen that during the whole preceding period of twenty-three years the number of our seamen had never been so much in excess of those of France as in 1858.

The above statement is more than confirmed by an official document which was in the hands of the First Lord when he brought forward his estimates, but which was not laid on the table of the House until the following April. It is entitled, "Report of a Committee appointed by the Treasury to inquire into the Navy Estimates from 1852 to 1858, and into the Comparative State of the Navies of England and France." In this document it is said that "France founds her calculations upon a return to her peace establishment of 1852, the number of her ships in commission for 1859 being 152, against 175 in the year 1852, and the number of seamen afloat being 25,784, against 25,016 in 1852." This gives an increase of 768 men.

The report then proceeds to give a corresponding comparison of the British Navy: "Our position is very different. On the 1st December, 1858, our ships in commission and their complements, as compared with 1852, were as follows:

	Ships.	Guns.	Seamen.
1st December, 1858	267	4,649	47,953
1st December, 1852	203	3,584	36,372
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Increase	64	1,065	11,581

This number is exclusive of a further increase of 3,302 marines on shore, including 1,800 employed on shore in China, also 3,880 seamen employed in the coast-guard on shore, making a total increase in 1858, as compared with 1852, of 18,763 seamen and marines.\* Thus it appears from our own official report that whilst France had added to her force afloat in six years 768 men, we had added to ours, afloat and on shore, 18,763; and that whilst on the 1st December, 1858, the navy of England numbered 55,135 men, that of France afloat contained only 25,784, or considerably less than one-half. When viewed by the light of these facts the tone of excitement and alarm which pervades the following statement becomes simply incomprehensible.

On the 25th February, 1859, the navy estimates were brought forward by the First Lord of the Admiralty (Sir John Pakington), who asked for an addition of £1,200,000 for ship-building, and proposed a vote of 62,400 men and boys, being the largest number ever maintained in a time of peace. He stated that when he succeeded to office he "did not find the navy of this country in a proper and adequate state for the defence of our coasts and the protection of our commerce;" he invited the House to "aid him in his attempt to restore the naval supremacy of England;" spoke of our having "fallen to the lowest amount ever known in our history—an amount not

\* *Parliamentary Paper*, No. 182, 1859, p. 22.

exceeding that of a neighbouring power (!) without anything like the same demand upon its force." \* He pleaded "the present aspect of public affairs" in justification of his proposal, alleging that "the Government would not have done their duty to the country if they had not boldly asked for the increase of force." †

But not confining himself to these generalities, he stated that during the summer the Government had thought it their duty to ascertain the state of the French navy. They had heard much of the progress made by France in increasing her naval armament during the last few years, and having taken means for ascertaining the facts they had found that the line-of-battle ships in France were exactly the same in number as our own, namely, twenty-nine. He calculated that at the progress then making France would at the end of the year 1859 have forty ‡ line-of-battle ships, and England only thirty-six. When this was brought under his notice in July he consulted his colleagues, and they determined that "it was a state of things that could not be allowed to continue;" and they resolved immediately to withdraw sufficient workmen from other occupations to convert four sailing line-of-battle ships into screws, and he now proposed to the House that five additional liners should be forthwith converted.§ At the same time he entered into a similar statement respecting frigates, in which he was sorry to say that our position was, in comparison, still more unsatisfactory, and that in the course of the autumn he had found that whilst we were in possession of thirty-four of these vessels, France had forty-six.||

Now, it was not this statement in itself—incomplete and inaccurate as it will be shown to be—so much as the manner

\* *Hansard*, clii. 882—912.

† *Ibid.*

‡ On the 11th April, 1861, more than two years later, we shall find Lord Clarence Paget, then Secretary of the Admiralty, stating in the House that France had only thirty-seven screw line-of-battle ships built and building.—*Hansard*, clxii. 442.

§ *Hansard*, clii. 882—912.

|| *Ibid.* clii. 908.

of making it, which tended to produce the subsequent alarm and panic. A tone of mysterious revelation pervaded the speech, the effect of which was heightened by repeated protestations of frankness; whilst a portentous significance was imparted to the proposed naval augmentations by such assertions as that "it was inconsistent with our naval power, and with our national safety and dignity, that we should allow such a state of things to continue,"\* and still more by the solemn adjurations which followed, invoking the Anglo-French alliance, "for the sake of England and the sake of the world." And yet, in fact, there was no secret to reveal, for the French Government had, in 1857, published to the whole world the programme of its future naval constructions for a period of thirteen years, founded on the report of a commission appointed in 1855. "The First Lord and his coadjutors," says the author of a volume containing much valuable information, when commenting on this speech, "had only discovered six months previously what was long before patent enough to any one who had taken the trouble to investigate the subject."† The House of Commons, however, offered no opposition when the First Lord finally announced his intention to add twenty-six men-of-war to the navy in one year."‡

This speech furnished arguments for the following twelve months to those who were employed in exciting the invasion panic. The statement which was most frequently quoted, and which became the favourite text for the alarmists, was that which placed England and France on an equality of twenty-nine line-of-battle ships each. This was arrived at by a departure from the invariable mode of comparison, by which the ships built and building are taken into account. On referring back to the comparative numbers of these vessels given by Sir Charles Wood on the 18th May, 1857, it will be seen that he states the English at forty-two, and the French at forty.§ They

\* *Hansard*, clii. 906.

† *The Navies of the World*, by HANS BUSK, p. 85.

‡ *Hansard*, clii. 942.

§ *Ante*, p. 587.



are now reduced to twenty-nine each, by taking only the numbers actually completed at the moment. Had the comparison been made in the usual manner, it would have stood as follows, according to the Parliamentary paper in the First Lord's hands : —

LINE OF BATTLE SHIPS BUILT AND BUILDING, *December, 1858.*

	English.	French.
Complete, hull and machinery . . . . .	29	29
Receiving engines . . . . .	4	2
Converting . . . . .	7	4
Building . . . . .	10	5
	—	—
Total . . . . .	50	40

Adding the nine coast-guard block-ships to the English column, it gives fifty-nine to forty French.

The total omission of the coastguard vessels from the First Lord's numerical statement of the line-of-battle ships and frigates possessed by the two countries calls for a few words of remark. It has been already shown that nine line-of-battle ships have been set apart for the protection of our arsenals and harbours. They mount, in the aggregate, about 600 guns, each vessel being "armed with 8-inch shell guns and 32-pounders, together with two 68-pounders and four 10-inch shell guns." †

These vessels are assigned to particular stations on the coast, though occasionally a paragraph in the newspapers informs us that they are mustered as a squadron in the Channel.‡ But wherever they may be, it will be found, on turning

\* *Parliamentary Paper*, 182, 1859, p. 15.

† Paper read at the Society of Arts, by Mr. E. J. REED, late of H.M.'s Dockyard, Portsmouth, 15th Dec. 1858, p. 15.

‡ THE BLOCK-SHIPS.—Commodore Yelverton's fleet of coast-guard block-ships, consisting of the *Majestic*, 80, Capt. Mends, C.B.; *Blenheim*, 60, Capt. Tatham; *Cornwallis*, 60, Capt. Randolph; *Edinburgh*, 60, Capt. D'Eyncourt; *Hawke*, 60, Capt. Crispin; *Hogue*, 60, Capt. Macdonald; *Russell*, 60, Capt. Wodehouse; *Ajax*, 60, Capt. Boyd; and the screw steam-frigate *Dauntless*, 34, Capt. Heath, C.B., after being duly inspected, as previously announced, by

over the pages of the Navy List, and referring to the "Majestic," "Blenheim," "Cornwallis," etc., that these block-ships carry their full complement of captain, lieutenants, chaplain, staff surgeon, paymasters, engineers, etc.; and we are told that crews of picked seamen, the veterans of the fleet, are provided for them.\* Yet these vessels, with their satellite fleet of gun-boats, are left altogether out of the numerical comparison of the English and French navies; they are not counted as line-of-battle ships, or even thrown into the scale to weigh against our neighbour's paddle frigates.

Now, if it could be shown that these ships are worthless, as some of our officials would seem to imply, what must be thought of the wisdom of those who incur from year to year all the current expenses of officering, manning, and arming in the most efficient manner vessels which are afterwards to count for nothing? The French, however, form a very different estimate of the value of our coastguard fleet, as the following extract from a work published under the sanction of their Government will show † :—

"The service of the coastguard is placed under the general direction of a Commodore of the first class, having the 'Pembroke' for his flagship. It includes seventy-three vessels. twenty-seven of which are steamers, and forty-six sailing vessels. All the coast has been divided into eleven districts, each commanded by a captain, having under his orders a certain number

Admiral Eden and Capt. Frederick, two of the Lords of the Admiralty, left Portland harbour on Wednesday and Thursday for their respective stations. The Colossus, 80, Capt. Scott, C.B., still bearing the flag of Commodore Yelverton, remains at anchor in that harbour, but is expected to leave for the Isle of Wight in a day or two. The Biter gun-boat, tender to the Colossus, is also at Portland.—*Times*.

\* The Channel fleet of block-ships were observed at Plymouth at noon on Sunday, approaching from the eastward. At five p.m. they were near the Eddystone, going down Channel under three foresails, jib, and spanker. Wind, north-west. Eleven ships in all; one a frigate.—*Herald*.

† "*The Army and Navy Budgets of France and England*," by M. CUCHEVAL CLARIGNY, p. 67.

of officers ; this staff amounts altogether to more than 250 officers of all grades. Nine ships-of-the-line and two frigates watch the eleven districts. With the exception of one, all these vessels are mixed ; that is, old sailing vessels, having had machinery adapted to them ; their armaments and masts have been reduced, so as to diminish their draft, and render them more manageable. The ships-of-the-line have sixty guns, the frigates fifty. Sixteen steam gun-boats and forty-seven vessels of light draught have been distributed between the eleven districts. It is quite a fleet, destined to a special service, and on board of which the manœuvres and the gun practice take place as regularly as on board of other vessels of war. The block-ships offer to England, for the defence of her harbours and dock-yards, means of defence which are entirely wanting in France."

It was by the total omission of this powerful fleet, in the enumeration of the forces of the two countries, that the statement of the First Lord startled the country, and furnished the "cry" to the alarmists—the echo of which has hardly yet died away—that France was our equal in line-of-battle ships, and was aiming at the supremacy of the seas.

The comparison of the number of frigates possessed by the two countries was hardly less fallacious than that of the ships of the line. In stating that England possessed fewer of these vessels than France, the faintest possible allusion was made to the immense superiority in tonnage and horse-power of the majority of our frigates ; whilst the numerical comparison alone reached the eye of the general public. The French Navy List contains fifteen vessels classed as paddle-frigates, which were built nearly twenty years ago for the transatlantic packet service, and on the failure of that enterprise were transferred to the Government navy in 1844-5.\* The very age of these

\* "France had, about the close of 1844, grafted into their navy twenty or twenty-two ships, varying from 1,500 to 1,700 tons, and about 450 horse-power. Those ships had been built for Transatlantic packets."—*Evidence of Sir Thomas Hastings before Committee on Army, Navy, and Ordnance, 1848, Qu. 9,797.*

vessels renders it unnecessary to speak of their quality. They carry sixteen guns, and, for comparison, they are put on an equality with our screw frigates of forty or fifty guns, some of which are of a larger tonnage than the line-of-battle ships of half a century ago! And, whilst these antique tubs are thus paraded to the terror of Englishmen, no credit is taken for our own splendid packet ships, which would be available, in case of emergency, in a few weeks; and some of which, as the *Persia*, for example, are more than double the tonnage, and of far greater speed, than these converted "frigates" of the French navy.

But the gravest fallacy in the First Lord's statement has still to be noticed. Why was the comparison restricted to ships of the line and frigates? The old nomenclature no longer serves for an accurate definition of the strength of ships of war. We had at the time fourteen vessels, called screw-corvettes, of from 20 to 22 guns each, in our Navy List, far more powerful than the above 16-gun frigates, whilst the French had only two of this class; and we had a dozen screw-sloops, of from 12 to 17 guns, of which the French had none; but these vessels were wholly kept out of view. Had the comparison been extended to all steam vessels, we should have shown an overwhelming superiority in these smaller ships, which were the pride of the Spithead Review, and had extorted so many eulogies from professional men. The First Lord did not omit to offer a passing compliment to this portion of our navy; but he found no place for it in his numerical comparison of the forces of the two nations, and it was this numerical comparison which was seized upon to promote the panic out of doors. The following figures, taken from the *Parliamentary Paper*\* to which attention has been already called, will show what the comparison would have been if it had embraced the smaller vessels:—England had eighty-two corvettes and sloops and France twenty-two: England had 162 gun-boats, and France

\* *Parliamentary Paper*, 182, 1859.

twenty-eight. If, after comparing the line-of-battle ships and frigates, there had been a comparison of the whole of the other steam vessels, the result would have been 380 English and 174 French.

The fact of our having built so many more small vessels than the French will partly, but not wholly, account for our not possessing a larger proportion of screw line-of-battle ships. England had, for a long series of years, been spending, at the very least, fifty per cent. more on the effective strength of her navy than France, and this ought to be a sufficient answer to the assertion that France had been aiming at an equality with us at sea. We build ships, construct steam-engines and machinery, and obtain coals and other stores twenty or thirty per cent. cheaper than our neighbours, and we ought, therefore, to secure a proportionately larger return for our outlay.\* *But these advantages are more than counterbalanced by the superior management of the naval department in France, by which they are enabled to avoid the waste of money, which is always going on in this country, upon unnecessary and useless constructions.* This will be illustrated by a brief examination of the valuable parliamentary document to which reference has already been repeatedly made.

It was stated to the House, by the First Lord of the Admiralty, that a Confidential Committee had been appointed in the winter of 1858, by Lord Derby's Government, to inquire into the comparative state of the navies of England and France. The Report of this Committee, dated January 6th, 1859, and intended, originally, for the eye of the Ministry only, was laid on the table of the House on the 3rd April following. The inquiry extended from 1852 to 1858. The reader may be

\* The late Lord Herbert, who had been three years Secretary to the Admiralty, in his evidence before the Select Committee on the Navy, in 1848, said, "I should never dream of instituting a comparison between our expenditure and that of France; because their expenditure is so lavish, and the result for the money spent so very small, that you cannot institute a comparison between them."—Q. 10,126.

reminded that Lord Derby's Administration was succeeded by that of Lord Aberdeen in the autumn of 1852; and that on the fall of Lord Palmerston's ministry, in February, 1858, the Conservative chief again returned to power. The Report embraces this interval; and is, therefore, an inquiry instituted by one body of politicians into the management of the navy during nearly six years by their opponents; and it would not imply any great ignorance of the inner play of party to suppose that, under such circumstances, we might find some hints, or disclosures, which would not be met with in a Report of one of the ordinary Commissions, appointed by a Government to inquire into its own conduct. It is difficult to believe that, if this document had been in the hands of members of Parliament before the First Lord had made his statement on the 25th February, they would have allowed their attention to be diverted across the Channel to the acts of a neighbouring government, instead of being directed towards their naval administration at home.

Shortly previous to 1852, the English and French Governments had been brought to the conviction that sailing ships of the line could no longer be depended on for purposes of war; and, after the experience of the Crimean campaign, they ceased to be taken into account in a comparison of the forces of the two countries. From 1852 to 1858 was, therefore, a period of transition from a sailing to a steam fleet. In 1852, England had 73 sailing vessels of the line, and France 45.\* In 1859, the country was startled by the First Lord's statement that France had 29 screw liners, whilst England possessed only the same number. How did this arise? The Report, after giving a mass of most valuable facts and statistics, goes straight to the point, and states that "the large increase of the French steam navy, since 1852, in line-of-battle ships and frigates, has been effected mainly by the conversion of sailing ships;" that "the number of men required to convert a three-decker into a

\* *Parliamentary Paper*, 182, 1859, p. 18.

90-gun steam-ship is stated to be five-eighths of the number required to build a new 90-gun steam-ship. The chief difference in the cost of conversion arises from the saving in materials. The cost of converting a line-of-battle ship of 90 guns is estimated at £25,000, and the cost of building the same at £105,000 ; but the latter will, of course, be a far more efficient and durable vessel ;" that "the process of conversion, on the other hand, is speedy as compared with that of building. The present seems a state of transition, as regards naval architecture, inducing the French Government to suspend the laying down of new ships of the line altogether, and it is more especially so with respect to artillery." \* The Report states that "*no line-of-battle ship has been laid down since 1855, in France, and there has not been a single three-decker on the stocks since that year ;*" and that of the forty-five sailing vessels, which France possessed in 1852, and of which ten remained in 1858, there were two only which were not "too old to be converted." †

In the meantime, England had pursued the double process of building new and converting old ships of the line. Between 1852 and 1858 we launched twenty-three liners. "Of the line-of-battle ships now building in English dockyards," says the Report, "one was laid down in 1855, two in 1856, one in 1857, and four in 1858." ‡ At the time when these last four were laid down, we had thirty-five sailing ships of the line afloat, of which nineteen are reported by the Surveyor of the Navy to be convertible into screw liners or frigates. He states, also, that we possessed seventy sailing frigates, of which twenty-seven were convertible.§

Now, inasmuch as the fitting of steam-engines into existing sailing ships is a much cheaper and more expeditious process than building new steamers and leaving sailing vessels to rot in ordinary, it was only natural that the conversion of a sailing

\* *Parliamentary Paper*, 182, 1859, p. 21.

† *Ibid.* p. 19.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 19.

§ *Ibid.* p. 20.



into a steam fleet should proceed more rapidly in the French than in the English dockyards. The obvious remedy was to follow the thrifty example of our neighbours; and this was the recommendation of the Report, which was made at the same time to convey, in language sufficiently intelligible, a censure on the conduct of the previous administration:—"We, therefore, venture to suggest, for your Lordships' consideration, whether, if the force in the dockyards were to be used next year in the conversion of ships of the line and frigates, as far as the available dock accommodation will admit, the most useful results might not be attained at a comparatively small expenditure." \*

We have seen that, in conformity with this Report, the First Lord announced to the House his intention to convert nine sailing line-of-battle ships into screw steamers, and he reserved other four for the next year. If this had been done, as it should have been, at the time when the French were similarly employed, and if the nine coast-guard vessels had been taken into account, where would have been the pretext for a panic? But it is hardly reasonable to hold the French Government responsible for a state of things which arose out of the maladministration of our own affairs, and which the Minister of Marine could have no power of remedying, except by lowering his own management to the level of that of our Admiralty.

In order to illustrate the foregoing statement, the following figures are extracted from this Report.

As it has been the custom to estimate the strength of a navy by the number of its line-of-battle ships, it will be well, in the first place, to give the particulars of this class of vessels.

*Comparative Numbers of English and French Line-of-battle Ships, in the years 1852 and 1858. †*

1852.		English.
Sailing Vessels . . . . .		73

\* *Parliamentary Paper*, No. 182, 1859, p. 21.

† *Ibid.* pp. 17—19.



Steam Vessels, afloat and building	. . . . .	17
Block Ships	. . . . .	4
		<hr/>
Total	. . . . .	94
		French.
Sailing Vessels	. . . . .	45
Steam Vessels, afloat and building	. . . . .	6
		<hr/>
Total	. . . . .	51

1858.

			English.
Sailing Vessels	. . . . .	35	
Steamers Complete	. . . . .	29	} 50
„ Receiving Engines	. . . . .	4	
„ Building	. . . . .	10	
„ Converting	. . . . .	7	
Block Ships	. . . . .	9	
		<hr/>	
Total	. . . . .	94	
			French.
Sailing Vessels	. . . . .	10	
Steamers Complete	. . . . .	29	} 40
„ Receiving Engines	. . . . .	2	
„ Building	. . . . .	5	
„ Converting	. . . . .	4	
		<hr/>	
Total	. . . . .	50	

It will be seen by comparison, that, instead of our having lost ground in ships of the line in six years, the total number of French vessels, sailing and steam, bore a smaller proportion by one to the English, in 1858 than in 1852. As an illustration of the economical example which the Minister of Marine had given to our Admiralty, by the conversion of sailing ships into steamers, it will be observed that, while France had reduced the number of her sailing vessels from forty-five to ten, or more than three-fourths, England had only diminished hers from seventy-three to thirty-five, or little more than one-half.

It should always be borne in view, that we are not

discussing the process of creating a navy, but of substituting one kind of ship for another. The following list of the numbers of line-of-battle ships possessed by the two countries at various epochs is interesting, as showing the number of sailing vessels formerly maintained by France. It appears that the French force, as measured by this class of vessels, has generally been equal to rather more than half of our own; and this seems to have been tacitly accepted by the two countries as a fair proportion for nearly a century, with the exception of that period of humiliation for France which immediately succeeded the restoration of the Bourbons.

*Numbers of Line-of-battle Ships in the English and French Navies at the following dates:—*

	British.	French.
1778 . . . . .	126	68
1794 . . . . .	145	77
1830 . . . . .	106	53
1840 . . . . .	89	44
1850 . . . . .	86	45
1858 . . . . .	94	50

The totals of the steamers of all sizes in the two navies were as follows in the years 1852 and 1858:—

1852	British Steamers of all sizes	. . .	176
1858	"              "	. . .	464
	British Increase	. . .	288
1852	French Steamers of all sizes	. . .	122
1858	"              "	. . .	264
	French Increase	. . .	142

Thus, while in six years the French added 142 steamers of all kinds to their navy, we added more than double the number to ours.

The following are the totals of both steamers and sailing vessels of all sizes in the two navies at the same dates:—

1852	British Steamers of all sizes	.	.	.	176
"	" Sailing vessels, ditto	.	.	.	299
	Total	.	.	.	475
1858	British Steamers of all sizes	.	.	.	464
"	" Sailing vessels, ditto	.	.	.	296
	Total	.	.	.	760
	British Increase	.	.	.	285
1852	French Steamers of all sizes	.	.	.	122
"	" Sailing vessels, ditto	.	.	.	258
	Total	.	.	.	380
1858	French Steamers of all sizes	.	.	.	264
"	" Sailing vessels, ditto	.	.	.	144
	Total	.	.	.	408
	French Increase	.	.	.	28

It is very instructive to observe the above numbers of sailing vessels in the two countries at both periods. In 1852, England possessed 299 of these vessels, which were reduced to 296 in 1858, being a diminution of three only. France possessed 258 sailing vessels in 1852, which were reduced to 144 in 1858, being a diminution of 114. These figures show that whilst France was engaged in converting her sailing vessels into steamers, England continued the processes of both building and converting. The consequence was that we had as many sailing vessels, within three, in 1858 as in 1852; and whilst France had increased the total number of her vessels, of all kinds, by 28 only, England had augmented hers by 285. That these figures \* prove an enormous amount of misapplied capital and labour in our dockyards, and place us, in point of management, in humiliating contrast with our neighbour, there can be no doubt.

\* They have been wholly taken from the Report. *Parliamentary Paper*, No. 182, 1859.

Sir Charles Wood, the preceding First Lord, felt, probably, that some of Sir John Pakington's statements glanced obliquely upon him, and on the 6th April he entered at length upon a vindication of his management. It is interesting to find him, in opposition, not only gathering up all the elements of our naval strength, including block-ships and gun-boats, which had been overlooked when the Estimates were brought forward in 1857, but disputing the pretensions of our neighbours, who had received such flattering eulogies on that occasion. "I would, however," said he,\* "remind the House that they must not suppose that all the French ships are as fine sea-going ships as our new line-of-battle ships. There is one of them, I know, the *Montebello*, which has only 140 horse-power; while the weakest of our block-ships † has 200 horse-power. I say that, for the defence of our coasts at least, these block-ships are good and efficient, and as available for that service as many of the French ships of the line are for attack. In considering our means of defence, I must, however, be allowed to take into account the numerous vessels of a smaller class which we possessed, and which, as the noble member for Sandwich (Lord Clarence Paget) said, no line-of-battle ships could resist."

Here was an excellent case established against any additional armaments: but, as the speaker gave a ready approval

\* *Hansard*, cliii. 1462.

† There is something almost dramatic in the transformation of opinion which is sometimes produced by the removal from the official to the opposition benches, and *vice versa*. On the 18th May, 1857, Sir Charles Wood, the First Lord, in bringing forward the Navy Estimates, stated that France had forty and England forty-two screw-liners. On the 12th April, 1858, Sir John Pakington, who had just succeeded to the office of First Lord, alluding to this statement of his predecessor, said, "It was not fair to exclude the block-ships, as you must do when you say that you have only two line-of-battle ships more than the French." On the 25th February, 1859, Sir John Pakington, in moving his Navy Estimates, stated that France had twenty-nine, and England had also twenty-nine screw line-of-battle ships, totally omitting the block-ships. On the 6th of April following, Sir Charles Wood, then in opposition, reminded the First Lord of this omission, and contended that the block-ships were good and efficient for the defence of the coast.

to the proposed increase of the Estimates, his argument was only calculated to inspire the public mind with still greater mistrust.

The better to understand the state of feeling in 1859, it is necessary to recur to the events which were then passing around us. Hostilities had commenced between France and Austria. The operations of the French army in Italy were watched with no friendly eye by the upper and conservative classes of this country, whose sympathies were generally on the side of Austria. On the contrary, with the mass of the people, the Government of Vienna was supremely unpopular, whilst an universal enthusiasm prevailed in favour of Italian independence. And although, undoubtedly, some mistrust was entertained towards the absolute ruler of France, in his new character of champion of the nationalities, still, for the sake of Italy, the popular sympathy followed the march of the French armies. At the same time a suspicion arose (the despatches of Lord Malmesbury not having been published) that our Conservative Government was pledging us to the side of the Austrians; and hence was witnessed the strange spectacle, for England, of public meetings called to proclaim the principle of non-intervention, which, truly interpreted, meant a protest against the interference of our Government on the wrong side.

This explanation may help to account for the fact that the loudest notes of alarm and hostility against France resounded from that usually serene and impassive body, the House of Lords. They did not avowedly espouse or defend the cause of Austria: public opinion was too strong in the opposite direction; but to proclaim the danger of an invasion of England, and thus to rouse the hostile passions of the country against the French Emperor, would act, to some extent, as a diversion in favour of his antagonist; and he is said, by those who were in a position to be well informed on the subject, to have been so far influenced by the hostile attitude manifested in high

quarters in this country, that it operated, among other things, disadvantageously to the Italian cause, in bringing the campaign to a precipitate close. The most inveterate alarmist might have rested satisfied that as the Emperor had allowed us to escape two years before, when we were involved in our Indian difficulty, he would not seek a rupture just at the moment when his own hands were so fully occupied in Italy. He knew that a war with England meant a campaign on the Rhine, as well as on the Mincio, with British subsidies to Austria and Germany, and a naval war extending to every sea. Yet this was the fate to which, in the eyes of panic-stricken peers, he was rushing, impelled—in the absence of every rational motive—by his destiny !

On the first of July, the Volunteer Corps and the Navy Estimates became the subjects of discussion in the Upper House. So much did the debate turn upon the question of invasion, that, at the first glance, it might be thought that we were not only at war with our next neighbour, but at the very crisis of a long struggle. Lord Ellenborough called for seventy line-of-battle ships ; but declared that no increase in the Navy could, under present circumstances, protect us against invasion ; that for “ six months in the year an enemy may land 60,000 to 80,000 men on any beach on the south coast of England.” With his wonted proneness to strategy, he called for forts to protect “ all the ports, and all the roads in which it would be possible for an enemy to place a fleet, with any degree of security, and where he might form *têtes-de-pont* that would assist his future operations ;” and he particularly pointed to Portland, “ that port which the late French ambassador went down to reconnoitre, and which he took the trouble of visiting at the end of last summer, in order to see the particular advantages it possessed. He trusted that, whenever that respectable gentleman went to that port again, he would find it in a better position than when he saw it last.” \*

\* *Hansard*, cliv. 532.

Lord Howden, who said "he resided in France, and his social relations were chiefly in that country," declared that the entire population of that empire were eager for the invasion of England, regardless of the consequences :—

"He did not believe that the idea of conquering this country had ever entered the head of any sane Frenchman, any more than that any sane Englishman had ever entertained the notion that we should allow ourselves to be conquered by France. He felt assured that no Frenchman had ever dreamt of taking possession of this island ; but he felt almost equally certain that every Frenchman living dreamt both by day and by night of humiliating this country, and robbing her of the position which she alone maintained among the nations of Europe, that of possessing an inviolate soil. Thousands of persons in England scouted the very thought of an invasion. They asked, 'What is the use of it?—it could have no permanent result.' The people of France were aware that it could not ; but then they did not adopt the same mode of reasoning on the subject. A forlorn hope might enter some miserable village, inhabited by six fishermen and a ploughboy : a bulletin might be signed on British soil, proclaiming the glorious triumph of French arms : the French eagles might stream from every steeple from Acton to Ealing and from Ealing to Harrow—the very prospect was enough to throw every Frenchman into a transport of joy ; and that, too, although he might be perfectly aware that not a single one of his countrymen would return home to tell the tale." He declared that a war against England would unite, in one body, Republicans, Imperialists, Orleanists, and Legitimists, and in conclusion said :—"Such a war was the only one which would ever be universally popular in France ; and, however reckless the attempt to invade England might be—however devoid of all rational hope of success—there was not a single widow in France who would not give her last son, or a single beggar who would not give his last penny, to carry out such a

project.”\* Lord Brougham controverted this view, and said he believed, on the contrary, that no act of the French Government could excite greater indignation among all classes of the French people than a quarrel with England. But he, too, called for increased preparations by land and sea.† Lord Hardwicke, with natural professional gallantry, would not listen to the plan of land defences, or tolerate the idea of an invasion; he was for carrying the war to the enemy’s coasts: “He held that it was the duty of the Government to render the navy of England sufficiently powerful not only to maintain the British Channel as the British Channel, but to enable us to insist that the boundaries of this country in that direction should be the low-water mark on the French shore.”‡

But the great speech of the session on this subject, and that which for a fortnight fluttered the fashionable world and agitated the clubs, has yet to be noticed. On the 5th July Lord Lyndhurst brought forward the subject of the national defences. He began his argument by repeating the statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty, that “France exceeded us the year before in a small proportion in line-of-battle ships, but she exceeded us in an enormous proportion in steam frigates.” Without one word of reference to the coast-guard fleet or floating batteries, or the small vessels, in which our superiority could be reckoned by hundreds, and which, as the naval authorities only two years before declared, rendered a landing on our shores impossible; or the scores of large ocean steamers in the employ of private companies, he brings the two “fleets” into combat in the Channel, and argues that, in case of defeat, we have no reserve to prevent an immense military force from being landed on our shores. The “fleets” are brought also into collision in the Mediterranean and elsewhere; but no allusion is made to the existence of any other than ships of the line and frigates. He cites Lord Palmerston’s “very emphatic words, that steam has converted the Channel into a river, and

\* *Hansard*, cliv. 517.

† *Ibid.*, 524.

‡ *Ibid.*, 528.



thrown a bridge across it ;” and he argues that “a large army may within a few hours—in the course of a single night—be landed on any part of our shores.” “I know,” said he, “from information which I have received, and the accuracy of which I do not doubt, that the French are at the present moment building steamers for the purpose of transporting troops, each of which is constructed to carry 2,500 men, with all the necessary stores. This, therefore, is the description of force which you must prepare yourselves to meet.” He called for an establishment of 100,000 troops and embodied militia, and the same number of disembodied and trained militia, “in order to be prepared for any emergency which may arise.” He avowed that he felt something like a sentiment of humiliation in going through these details. “I recollect,” said he, “the day when every part of the opposite coast was blockaded by an English fleet. I remember the victory of Camperdown, and that of St. Vincent, won by Sir John Jervis ; I do not forget the great victory of the Nile, nor, last of all, that triumphant fight at Trafalgar, which almost annihilated the navies of France and Spain. I contrast the position which we occupied at that period with that which we now hold. I recollect the expulsion of the French from Egypt ; the achievement of victory after victory in Spain ; the British army established in the south of France ; and, last of all, that great victory by which the war was terminated.” Interspersed among these irritating reminiscences were such remarks as—“I will not consent to live in dependence on the friendship or forbearance of any country ;” “are we to sit supine on our own shores, and not prepare the means necessary in case of war to resist that power ?” \*—remarks which, considering our overwhelming naval superiority at the time, can be compared only to the act of brandishing a weapon in the face of a friendly neighbour.

Fully to comprehend the scope and temper of these utterances, which were received by the assembled peers with a

rapturous welcome, it is necessary to consider for a moment the circumstances under which the speech was delivered. The speaker represented more than any other peer the legal and constitutional character of the Upper House. His judicial mind and great age tended naturally to impart a tone of moderation and caution to his observations ; and he was commenting on the policy of a nation with whom we were at peace, and from whose Sovereign our Government had received numerous proofs of friendship. Nor must the circumstances in which the two countries were at the moment placed be overlooked. France had hardly emerged from a war for an object in which the British nation had long felt the deepest sympathy,—and for the outbreak of which the statesmen of both our political parties held Austria responsible—and she had incurred an exhaustive sacrifice of life and treasure which contributed, with other considerations, to bring the struggle to an early and unexpected close. At the same time, our own naval preparations were on a scale of unparalleled magnitude for a time of peace. Taking the average of the years 1858-9, it will be seen, on reference to the accounts in the first page, that the number of our seamen was more than double that of the French navy—a disproportion quite unexampled during the last thirty years. It was under these circumstances, and when not an act or word on the part of the French Government indicated a hostile disposition, that the foremost man in the highest assembly of Englishmen delivered, amidst enthusiastic plaudits, the speech of which the above is a brief outline. If England had been a weak country, threatened with invasion by a powerful enemy, nothing could have been more calculated to stir the patriotism of its inhabitants than to remind them of the exploits of their fathers ; but to declaim of Trafalgar and the Nile,—to taunt with their reverses a brave people who were no longer our enemies but our friends,—was more derogatory to ourselves than to the object of these taunts. It must be acknowledged that the dignified calmness with which such

gratuitous insults as these have for many years been borne, bespeaks the possession of a large share of self-command on the part of our neighbours.

From the remarks which fell from other peers, it might have been supposed that England was at the time completely disarmed. Forgetting our 464 steamers, our 62,400 seamen, the Militia Act of 1852, and the "very little short of 200,000 fighting men whom, in the event of war, we could put into the field," \* Lord Ellenborough exclaimed—"My Lords, it is not safe for this country to remain unarmed in the midst of armed nations. When, of two neighbouring nations who have ever been rivals, and have often been engaged in desperate hostilities against each other, one determines to apply all her energies to making money, and the other to making preparations for war, it is obvious enough with which of the two nations all the money must ultimately remain." †

Lord Stratford de Redcliffe also—after expressing his gratitude to Lord Lyndhurst "for calling attention to this most important and solemn question at so anxious a time as the present," and reminding his hearers that "although the supplies necessary for taking the precautionary measures now suggested could not originate in that House, nevertheless, those measures had first been brought under consideration there,"—proceeded to remark on the unwillingness of free countries to prepare for defence in anticipation of war; and declared "that it was a just cause of shame and an intolerable humiliation, that a great empire like ours should appear, though it were only for one hour, to exist by sufferance, and at the good pleasure of a forbearing neighbour." ‡

The administration of Lord Derby having in the previous month been displaced by that of Lord Palmerston, the Government was on this occasion represented by Lord Granville, who, in allusion to the tone of Lord Lyndhurst's speech,

\* Lord Palmerston, August 5, 1859, *Hansard*, clv. 1,079.

† *Hansard*, cliv. 645.

‡ *Ibid.* 627—8.

said :—"If a feeling of hostility does exist, as he says it does, not on the part of the Emperor Napoleon, but on the part of the French people, I doubt that his speech will tend to allay it. When he points out in the most marked way the defenceless character of our shores—when at the same time he boasts of our former victories, and when he makes something like insinuating and sneering allusions both to the Government and people of France—I am afraid that, coming from such lips as his, such language is not well calculated to promote the object of unbroken friendly alliance." The Duke of Somerset, who had succeeded Sir John Pakington as First Lord of the Admiralty, was still more plain-spoken on this point: "He greatly regretted the exciting language which their lordships had just heard. If such language were persevered in, it would be necessary to have not only a peace, but a war establishment. There was no peace whatever in the language of the noble and learned lord (Lord Lyndhurst). That language was calculated to excite the passions of England and France; and he thought it most unwise to talk as the noble and learned lord had done of two great nations."

It was not the speeches of individuals, however high their rank or eminent their ability, but the constant augmentation of our armaments, by successive Governments, which mainly tended to excite feelings of alarm and resentment towards France; and in this policy the administration which had now returned to power will be found to surpass all preceding Governments.

Parliament had reassembled, after the dissolution by Lord Derby's Government, on the 31st May, 1859; and in the following month Lord Palmerston's Ministry resumed office. Just previous to the dissolution, Lord Clarence Paget had brought forward a motion on the Dockyard Expenditure, when he adduced a very elaborate series of figures and estimates to prove that, during the past eleven years, there had been an unnecessary expenditure, "a deficit or a discrepancy," of

£5,000,000 of money in the Government yards,—equal to twenty-two line-of-battle ships, with all complete, ready for sea. He spoke of an extravagance in the ship-building department which “really appalled him;” said he could point out the reason why we had so little to show for such an enormous expenditure; and that, if his motion were accepted, “such statements as that of Sir John Pakington—which had produced such a painful sensation out of doors, namely, that, after laying out £20,000,000 on a steam navy simply for the construction of the ships, and exclusive of the cost of their engines and machinery, we were, both in numbers and quality, inferior to the French in line-of-battle ships,—would be impossible.” The following graphic description of the manner in which our dockyard artificers amuse themselves might help to account for some superiority in the French navy, without implying any great merit on the part of our neighbour:—

“He did not think the House had the smallest notion of what had been going on in our dockyards in the way of tinkering vessels, amputating them, and performing all sorts of surgical operations upon them. They had their heads cut off, they had their tails cut off, they were sawn asunder, they were maltreated in every possible way. Ships built ten years ago by Sir William Symonds were not in fashion at the present day, and nobody could blame the Admiralty for lengthening and altering them because, as originally constructed, they were not now fit to go to sea; but he wished to speak of the reckless alterations of new ships. Their name was legion: almost every ship was altered; there was scarcely one that had not undergone some frightful operation at some time or other.”

He characterised Sir John Pakington’s speech, on moving the Navy Estimates, as being “the truth and nothing but the truth, but not the whole truth;” and he proceeded to say “that it was a very able statement to make out his case, first to attack the right hon. gentleman who preceded him in office, and secondly, to induce the House to grant a large sum of

money to increase our line-of-battle ships ; but he must also say that it tended to create an alarm, which he for one did not share. The First Lord, for example, did not tell the House of an admirable class of vessels, in which we possessed an immense superiority over the French ; a superiority measured, according to the right hon. Member for Halifax (Sir Charles Wood), by 200 excellent small ships. He was not going to enter into a discussion upon the comparative merits of line-of-battle ships and gun-boats. But if he had a large sum of money to lay out, he would prefer, not gun-boats exclusively, but certainly small vessels.”\*

In the course of the discussion, Mr. Lindsay said “he believed that £7,000,000, properly applied, would go as far as £10,000,000 now went in building our ships of war, and in our naval expenditure generally.”† And on a previous occasion it had been stated by Mr. Bentinck that “he had asked many of the most eminent owners of private yards in the country the question—‘Supposing you were to carry on your yards upon the system on which Her Majesty’s dockyards are conducted, what would be the result?’ And the invariable answer had been, if we were to approach that system, with the Bank of England at our back, we should be ruined in six months.”‡

On the 8th July, Lord Clarence Paget, having in the meantime accepted the post of Secretary of the Admiralty, introduced the Navy Estimates to the House in a long speech. The independent irresponsible critic had been suddenly metamorphosed into the Government Official. The sound precepts recently uttered by the naval reformer were brought so abruptly to the test of practice that the transformation had almost a touch of romance in it. It was as though Haroun Alraschid had seized a malcontent in his audience-chamber, thrown the pelisse of Grand Vizier over his shoulders, and said :—“Thou sayest well—do as thou sayest.” As the Secretary had only

*Hansard*, cliii. 39—48.

† *Hansard*, *ib.* 72.

‡ *Hansard*, *ib.* 62.

been a few days in the department, and as the Estimates were, with some additions, those of his predecessor, which had been virtually passed, his speech may be fairly exempted from criticism. It has all the candour and hopefulness which generally characterise the first utterances of Officials before they have occasion to apply to the House for money. He put in the foreground the coastguard fleet which had been entirely ignored by his predecessor, declaring that "he could not speak too highly of those block-ships." He expatiated also upon our resources in merchant-steamers and private dockyards :—

"Why, Sir, we have got, I take it from a Return that was moved for a few days ago, by my hon. friend the Member for Penryn (Mr. T. G. Baring), 159 steam vessels over 1,000 tons each, and 72 between 1,000 and 700 tons each, together 231 merchant steam vessels, most of which might be quickly adapted to carry Armstrong guns, and thus prove a most valuable addition to the defences of the country. There is yet another source from which we can very largely increase our navy at any moment with regard to ships, and that is our commercial yards. Here is another Return, which I think will be interesting to the Committee, according to which there are, in addition to the shipwrights employed in the Royal dockyards, about 10,000 shipwrights in Great Britain. Now, it is an old shipwright's maxim that 1,000 shipwrights can build eight men-of-war of 1,000 tons each in twelve months; consequently, 10,000, which is the number that we have in the commercial yards of this country, could build 80 corvettes of 1,000 tons each in twelve months, or at the rate of between six and seven per month." \*

He stated that the number of men then actually employed in the Government dockyards was 17,690, as against 14,128 in the beginning of March; and he added :—

"During the past year, we have built in tonnage of line-of-battle ships, 10,604 tons; in frigates, 5,851 tons; in corvettes,

\* *Hansard*, cliv. 905.

1,193 tons ; and in sloops and gun-vessels, 1,511 tons ; making the total tonnage built, up to the end of the last financial year, 19,159.

\* \* \* \* \*

During the present year, supposing that our scheme is carried out, and that no unforeseen contingency should arise, we shall build of line-of-battle ships, 19,606 tons ; of frigates, 15,897 tons ; of corvettes, 5,130 tons ; and of sloops and gun-vessels, 5,651 tons ; making a total of 46,284 tons which will be built this year, against 19,159 tons last year.” \*

It may be concluded, from his reiterated declaration in favour of small vessels, that he administered with much repugnance to this enormous outlay on line-of-battle ships ; but he must not be held responsible for the engagements of his predecessor.

Hitherto, the invasion agitation had been confined almost exclusively to the Peers. With the exception of the indefatigable Sir Charles Napier, very little had been said on the subject in the House of Commons since the startling speech on the introduction of the navy estimates. Indeed, the gallant Admiral could not help lamenting the want of that enthusiasm which had characterised the debates in the Upper House : “ He had derived great satisfaction from the speeches delivered in another place by Lord Lyndhurst, Lord Hardwicke, and Lord Ellenborough, with every word of which he perfectly agreed, and he only wished they could hear such speeches in the House of Commons.” † His wish was speedily to be gratified. But, before coming to the occasion, it may be well to note a straw in the wind. On the 15th July, Lord William Graham, addressing himself to the Foreign Minister, said, “ he wished to ask the question of which he had given notice, whether the Government had received any information respecting the formation of a large Channel Fleet at Brest, with gun-boats and means for embarking and disembarking troops,

\* *Hansard*, cliv. 914.

† *Ibid*, 993.



and, if so, whether they had demanded any explanations from the French Government on the subject."\* To which Lord John Russell replied, that our Consul at Brest had informed him that "there were no extraordinary preparations going on either at Cherbourg or Brest."

That which, without offence, may be called the great panic speech of the session—for no other epithet will so properly describe it—has now to be noticed. On the 29th July, 1859, Mr. Horsman brought forward his motion for raising money by loan "for completing the necessary works of national defence projected, or already in progress." The most desponding and terror-stricken invasion theory was put forth on this occasion. The motion assumed that all other modes of defence, whether by fleets, armies, militia, or volunteers, were insufficient; and proposed to borrow a sum of money, which ultimately took the formidable proportions of from ten to twelve millions to be expended on fortifications. The speech delivered on the occasion, unexceptionable as a rhetorical performance, was absolutely destitute of one fact or figure to prove the danger against which we were called upon to arm. There were vague assertions of "enormous preparations" and "increasing armaments," on the part of France, and she was said, in her naval preparations, to have "got ahead of us, and to be making every effort to preserve that start," whilst on our part there was, with the same sweeping vagueness, said to be a "want of all plan or preparation for defence on this side of the Channel;" but, from the first word to the last, the speech did not contain one syllable respecting the comparative strength of the English and French navies. France might at the time have had 100,000 seamen, and 100 ships of the line in the Channel, judging from the tone of the speaker, and for any information which he imparted to the contrary. Let it not, however, be thought, after this description, that too much space is devoted to the following extracts; for, although the motion did not

\* *Hansard*, cliv. 1293.

succeed at the moment, it required only a twelvemonth, as we shall see, to make the speaker the triumphant master of the situation. The country has, in accordance with his views, been committed to a plan of expenditure more likely to reach twenty millions than ten, unless arrested by the good sense of the people, or by a recurring reverse in the revenue ; and the future advocates of the scheme may be defied to show any better grounds for the outlay than will be found in the splendid declamation before us :—

“The Emperor of the French,” said he, “acted for the interests of France ; it was ours to guard the safety of England, and if he were asked, ‘Why do you suspect the French Emperor of designs of war?’ and still more, ‘Why do you insult him by suspicions of invasion?’ he should be driven to answer by a reference to facts as notorious in France as in England—that he apprehended war because he saw the Emperor of the French preparing for it ; and he anticipated invasion, because an attempted invasion must be a necessary accompaniment of the war ; and as they saw unmistakeable proofs of preparation for war, so also those who were not wilfully blind must see the most unmistakeable proofs of preparation for invasion ; and as to our insulting him by the suspicion, he replied, that no man could be insulted by our believing what he himself openly, publicly, and ostentatiously told us he would probably do.

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“They (the Emperor’s writings) afforded the key of what would otherwise be a mystery, and enable people to interpret what would otherwise be unintelligible, namely, that those vast preparations, the extension of the navy, the fortification of the coast, the enlargement and increase in the number of transports, and the conscription for the marine, all indicated preparation for a gigantic enterprise, to be undertaken some day or another against a gigantic naval Power, and that Power need not be named.’ \*

\* *Hansard*, clv. 688-9.

He did not, however, confine himself to a description of these mighty preparations, but, warming as he proceeded, and giving a free rein to his imagination, he thus pictured a descent on our shores :—"That army would leave its own ports an exultant, and, by anticipation, a victorious army. From the moment it landed on the shores of England it would have to fight its way with the desperation of a forlorn hope, and, within two or three weeks of the landing of the first Zouave, either it would be completely annihilated, or London would be taken." \* Having passed a glowing eulogy on Lord Lyndhurst, declaring "that he esteemed it a good fortune and a privilege to have heard the speech of that venerable peer, whose courageous exposition of a national danger had caused so much sensation," † he called for measures of immediate protection, in language more suited to a Committee of Public Safety than, under the circumstances, to the House of Commons :—

"Not a moment must be lost in making the country safe against every accident ; and until it was so, we must act as if the crisis were upon us. No human tongue could tell how soon or how suddenly it might arrive, and that it might still be distant was our good fortune, of which we should make the most. Every public or private yard should be put into full work ; every artificer and extra hand should work extra hours, as if the war were to begin next week. As gunboats could be built more rapidly than men-of-war, gunboats should be multiplied as fast as possible ; as volunteers could be enrolled faster than the line, they should at once be raised ; as rifles could not be made fast enough in England, we should renew that order in Belgium, even though they should cost sixpence a-piece more than the Horse Guards' regulation ; and, night and day, the process of manufacturing, constructing, arming, drilling, should go on till the country was made safe, and then we might desist from preparations, and return to our peace expenditure, with the certainty that these humiliating, lowering,

\* *Hansard*, clv. 685.† *Hansard*, clv. 678.

and degrading panic-cries of invasion would never disturb our country or our Government again." \*

The following is the only approach to a fact in the whole speech respecting the French naval armaments:—"While we were only experimenting, France had already built iron-cased vessels, armed with rifled artillery—[Sir Charles Napier: Hear, hear! ]—and could, at short notice, bring into the Channel a fleet more powerful than ours, and could man it more easily with practised seamen." † This was spoken on the 29th of July, 1859. On the 6th of February following the writer of these pages visited Toulon, and found workmen employed in hanging the armour on the sides of the still unfinished *La Gloire*, the first *sea-going* iron-clad ship ever built (for England had, at the time, more iron-cased floating *batteries* than France), ‡ and she did not make her first trial trip in the Mediterranean till August, 1860, or more than a year after these terrified utterances.

The only way of opposing reason to declamation is by exposing its want of argument, and supplying its deficiency of facts. The eloquent alarmist called for the multiplication of gun-boats, forgetting that we had at that time 162, whilst France had only 28; he required that "every artificer and extra hand should work extra hours," and he had been told three weeks previously that a system of "task and job-work and over hours of working had been established in the dockyards § to build 46,284 tons, this year, against 19,159 tons last year;" and he totally lost sight of the enormous and almost unprecedented superiority of our navy in commission at the time, as compared with that of France.

\* *Hansard*, clv. 686—7.

† *Hansard*, clv. 684.

‡ "The hon. member for Inverness-shire had stated that the building of iron-plated batteries had been neglected in this country. But the fact was that in the year 1855 the French sent two of those floating-batteries to the Crimea, and we also sent two; while, in the following year, we had not less than eight of them, to the two possessed by the French."—SIR CHARLES WOOD, *Hansard*, clxi. 1185.

§ *Ibid.* cliv. 912.

As the agitation now about to break forth out of doors respecting the National Defences, and for the promotion of Rifle Corps, was the result of the cry of alarm which was raised in the two Houses respecting the naval preparations in France, it may be well here to give the official accounts of the two countries for 1859, the last year for which, at the time of penning these pages, the French accounts are definitively audited. The following figures, taken from the tables in the first page, will show the number of men, the amount expended in dockyard labour, and the total expenditure for the navies of the two countries :—

		1859.		
		Number of Men.	Wages in Dockyards.	Total Expenditure.
England	... ..	72,400	£1,582,112	£11,072,243
France	... ..	38,470	772,931	8,333,933

It must be borne in mind that this was the year of the war in Italy, when the French navy was called into requisition to aid in the operations of the army, and especially to assist in the transport of troops to Genoa. Yet it will be seen that our total expenditure exceeded that of France by the amount of £2,738,310. The disproportion is, however, still greater if we compare the items : in men, our force was nearly double, whilst our dockyard expenditure, which has always been called the “aggressive outlay,” was actually more than double. If we compare the two years 1858 and 1859, we shall find that whilst France added 8,868 to the number of her men, we added 16,517, or nearly double the French increase. It will be found, also, by a comparison of the expenditure in the dockyards for the same years, that whilst our increase was £590,520, that of France was only £131,977. This shows that the increased cost of the French navy was for the current expenses, in materials, coal, provisions, pay, &c., consequent upon employing 300 vessels in 1859, as against 199 in 1858, and not for building new ships to create a permanent increase of force. And this view has been verified by an examination of all the

details of the French naval expenditure for 1859. If the reader will carry his eye carefully back over the whole of the tables in the first page, he will find that at no time, for twenty-five years, had the naval preparations of England, as measured by the number of men, or the expenditure for building ships, been so disproportionately great, as compared with those of France, as in 1859. The alarm on this occasion, as in the case of the previous panic of 1851, was excited at the very time when it happened to have the least foundation; which might appear strange, did we not know that panic is not the product of reason but passion, and that it is quite as likely to occur under one state of circumstances as another.

Although little allusion will be made to the increase in our land forces—because it has not, as in the case of the navy, been generally justified by an appeal to the corresponding preparations in France—yet it must not be forgotten that the army, militia, and ordnance, had undergone augmentations simultaneously with those of our fleets. In a subsequent debate on the National Defences (5th August), Lord Palmerston said:—

“I hold that, in the event of war, we could put into the field something little short of 200,000 fighting men. We have the regular force of, I hope, not less than 60,000 men. Then we have the Militia, the establishment of which is 120,000 men; and if that Militia be well recruited and supplied, as, in the event of emergency, I am sure would be the case, I reckon upon 100,000 there. Then we have 14,000 yeomanry, 12,000 or 14,000 pensioners, and those men who have served their ten years, with whom my right hon. friend the Secretary for War proposes to deal to-night. We have, also, always at home a certain force of marines; and we could, if we chose, re-organise our dockyard battalions for the defence of these establishments. Putting all these forces together, I say that an enemy contemplating an attack upon us must reckon upon not less than 200,000 men to resist him.”

Such was the state of our preparations, by land and sea,

when Parliament was prorogued, after having laid the train for an agitation which spread throughout the country during the recess. The Rifle Corps movement, which now arose, is of such recent origin, and the subsequent proceedings to promote its success are so fresh in the memory of all, that it is unnecessary to dwell on the subject. Not only were special meetings called to forward the object, but at every public gathering, whatever its origin or purpose, the topic was sure to be obtruded. Especially was it so at the Agricultural Societies' meetings, whose orators, instead of descanting on the rival breeds of cattle or the various kinds of tillage, discussed the prospects of an invasion and the best mode of dealing with the invaders:—"How much will you charge the French for your corn when they land?" cried one of his audience to a sturdy Somersetshire yeoman who was on his legs addressing them; and his reply—"They shall pay for it with their blood"—elicited rounds of applause. The assumption everywhere was—founded on the declarations made in Parliament—that France was surpassing us as a naval power; that she was our equal in the largest ships, and was now providing herself with an iron-cased fleet, in which description of vessels we were quite unprepared, and that we must, therefore, be ready to fight for freedom on our own soil. The ambitious designs of the third Napoleon were discussed in language scarcely less denunciatory than that which had been applied to his uncle fifty years before. To doubt his hostile intentions was a proof either of want of patriotism or sagacity. Had not venerable peers proclaimed their alarm—and would they have broken through their habitual reserve without sufficient cause? And did not successive Governments make enormous additions to our Navy Estimates? They were in a position to command exclusive information; and was it likely, unless they had positive proofs of impending danger, that they would have imposed such unnecessary expense on the country? This last appeal was quite irresistible: for, the good British public defer, with a faith amounting to a

superstition, to the authority of official men. All this tended to throw the odium of our increased taxation on the Emperor—who was supposed to personify our national danger—and the ominous words were sometimes heard: “We had better fight it out.” Such was the state of fear, irritation, and resentment, into which the public mind was thrown towards the close of 1859; and probably at no previous time, within the experience of the present generation, would the country have been, had any accident afforded the occasion, so resigned to a war with France.

It was under these circumstances that the writer of these pages visited Paris,\* on an errand which detained him in France for more than a year. For several months afterwards, the reports of speeches at Rifle Corps meetings continued to reach the French capital, having for their invariable burden complaints of the hostile attitude of the ruler of France, whose character and designs, it must be confessed, were portrayed in not the most flattering colours. The effect produced by the invasion panic in England was very dissimilar upon different classes in France. Statesmen, and men of education and experience, did not give the British Government credit for sincerity when it made the alleged naval armaments of France the plea for extraordinary warlike preparations. Their opinion could not be better expressed than in the words of M. Ducos—already quoted—who, when writing privately to one of his colleagues during the former panic, observed that “the English Cabinet may possibly not be very much distressed by these maginary terrors (as we have sometimes seen among ourselves), inasmuch as they enable them to swell their budget, and serve

\* The following incident will illustrate the state of public feeling. On his way to Paris, the writer passed a day or two at Brighton, where he met a friend—certainly one of the last men to be charged with a deficiency of courage—who, on learning the writer’s destination, avowed that he had been deterred from taking his family for the autumn to the French metropolis by the fear of a rupture with France, and the risk of being detained prisoner by the Emperor, after the precedent of 1803.



to strengthen a somewhat uncertain majority in Parliament.”\* And some pungent remarks in this sense were frequently heard in the circles of Parisian society.† But among the less intelligent masses of the people the effect was different. Their ears had caught the echo of the voice of Sir Charles Napier, who had been for years incessantly proclaiming our naval inferiority, until there was at last a wide-spread popular belief that France had become the mistress of the Channel. With the exception of an occasional article in a semi-official journal, giving a comparison of the naval expenditure of the two Governments, with perhaps a self-complacent commentary on the superior economy of the French administration, nothing was done to disabuse the public mind on the subject. And this popular delusion might have been an element of danger to the peace of the two countries, had it not been for the character of the Emperor, who, throughout these provocations, displayed a perfect equanimity and self-control—the rarest quality to be found in those who have climbed the dizzy heights of power.

During his residence in France the writer profited by the best possible opportunity for making himself acquainted with the naval preparations of that country. The arsenals were opened to him or his friends, and there was no official information which he sought and failed to obtain. The result of this investigation was merely to confirm the conviction which had been previously derived from our own official documents. Had it been otherwise these pages would not have been penned. And yet the writer asks no credit for any statements they contain on the ground of his private or exclusive sources of information. The facts contained in the following, as in the preceding pages, must owe all their value to the public and official sources, equally accessible to everybody, from whence they are derived. In the citations from *Hansard* it has been

\* *Ante*, p. 575.

† “Ah, pauvre John Bull!” exclaimed a lady in the presence of the writer, “quand on veut lui enlever son argent on lui fait peur de nous.”

thought fair to allow the statesmen who officiate in that great laboratory of our history, the British parliament, to be heard as much as possible in their own language.

On the 13th February, 1860, the navy estimates were proposed to the House; but before the Secretary of the Admiralty was permitted to commence his task, the ever-watchful and indefatigable Mr. Williams entered his protest against "the enormous increase in the estimates for the present year," asserting that "the grand total, which exceeded £12,800,000, was larger in amount by more than £1,000,000 than any that had ever been presented to that House in a time of peace;" and he proceeded to remark that "the number of men required for the navy this year of peace was 85,500, being 6,000 more than they required when they were actually at war with Russia." Mr. Lindsay and Mr. Bentinck rose successively to acquit the Secretary of the Admiralty of all responsibility for not being able "to carry out in office the economical views he had expressed in Opposition." It will be necessary not only to accept this generous theory, but still farther to enlarge the bill of indemnity, and assume that the statement now made was not the speech of Lord Clarence Paget, but that it was prepared for him by those who were responsible for the estimates.

To reconcile the country to this enormous expenditure it was necessary that the French navy should be made to assume very alarming proportions. But how was this to be accomplished by any ordinary mode of comparison? If the expenditure in the dockyards had been compared ours would have been shown to be double that of France. If it had been a comparison of seamen, the number voted, together with the reserve, would have been found nearly three times as great in England as in France. Had the ships in commission, or the ships afloat in the two navies, been compared, the effect would have been the reverse of what was desired. A very ingenious and perfectly original mode of comparison was adopted. The number of ships in *commission* in England was compared with

the number *afloat* in France. They chanced to be 244 in each case,\* and this equality was perhaps the temptation to adopt the new method. Had the numbers afloat in both cases been given they would have been, as afterwards incidentally appears in the statement, 244 French and 456 English.† In justification of this mode of comparison, by which all the British vessels not having crews were left out of the account, it was alleged that “while all the French ships that were afloat could be manned at a very short notice, it was only those which we had in commission which were in a similar position.”‡ It is to be regretted that there was no Lord Clarence Paget in Opposition to ask—“Of what use could it be to build ships and launch them if they were afterwards to count for nothing?” But it is curious to observe in another part of the same statement how this difficulty is surmounted, for in speaking of the facility with which seamen had been obtained, it is said—

“And perhaps I had better add a more practical assurance, that, if we wished, we could not enter them (seamen) in the navy, because the number is complete, and except for casualties we have no means of entering any considerable number of men over and above what we have at present. I think that is a very satisfactory state of things, and that the House will be glad to hear that there is no difficulty in getting men. This vast force of ships, only the creation of the last few months, is wholly manned.”§

Now it is high time that we shook off this bugbear of the difficulty of manning the navy and learnt to rely on the infallible law of demand and supply. Formerly we trusted to the press-gang to steal the men; in future we shall find it a cheaper and safer method to pay the market price for them.||

\* *Hansard*, clvi. 966-9.

† *Hansard*, clvi. 966-9.

‡ *Hansard*, clvi. 967.

§ *Hansard*, clvi. 974.

|| “If they wanted men in the navy they must resort to the same means as a mercantile man or a mill-owner, namely, offer a good market price for labour. If they wanted sailors they must offer to pay sufficiently high to induce them to come forward and enter the service. To expect men to enter for low wages

This is illustrated by the case before us. At the moment when this statement was heard there was a bounty payable of £4 for able and £2 for ordinary seamen. It had been fixed at £10 the year before by Sir John Pakington, but it was soon found not to be necessary to pay so high a bounty to bring our navy up to 80,000 men. Now we will suppose that a war was impending, and that the country required the services of 150,000 instead of 80,000 seamen, is there any doubt that England could afford to pay the necessary price for them? There is no kind of skilled labour so available, because there is none so migratory and so free from local ties as that of the sailor. Let us assume a sudden and urgent necessity to arise, and that our Government offered to pay £40 a year to able-bodied seamen, which would be £10 or £15 more than the present pay, taking care that the wages be paid monthly in order to avoid the temptation to desert which would be offered by paying a bounty in advance, unquestionably such an offer would give the Admiralty the pick not only of our own merchant service, but of the seamen sailing out of American, German, and Scandinavian ports. Now £40 each for 150,000 seamen amounts to just £6,000,000 a year. It is about sixpence in the pound of the income-tax, or half the amount paid in excise and Customs' duties by the consumers of ardent spirits. A nation so rich as this would cheerfully pay such an amount for its defence in case of danger. It would be but the most fractional percentage of insurance on the thousands of millions worth of property in these islands, and would be but only about five per cent. on the estimated average value of the ships and cargoes afloat belonging to British owners. But if it be admitted that at least on these, if not on cheaper terms, the seamen will be forthcoming in case of an

would only lead to disappointment ; it would be found impossible to get them without high wages. That was the only fair and just way of obtaining them, but hitherto the House of Commons had refused to adopt it.—SIR CHARLES NAPIER *Hansard*, clvii. 1810.

impending war, what becomes of the argument that we can only calculate on manning those ships which are already in commission?

If we pursue the statement of the Secretary of the Admiralty a little more into details, we find, on comparing the whole of the screw line-of-battle ships, built and building, in the two navies, that whilst France is stated to possess thirty-seven, England is put down at fifty-nine, with the nine block-ships making sixty-eight. The English frigates are set down at forty-five, and the French at forty-seven, including the fifteen old trans-Atlantic paddle steamers. In the smaller descriptions of vessels, our number was double that of the French.

The striking fact is given in this statement that we had still twelve sailing line-of-battle ships fit for conversion into screw steamers. Now, considering that the Admiralty had, ever since 1850, professed to lay down no vessels of this class which were not expressly designed for steam machinery, thus recognising the fact that sailing vessels were for the future obsolete, what shall be said of the policy of continuing to build new ships, and leaving twelve sailing vessels still fit to be converted in 1860, to say nothing of those which had in the interval been decaying in ordinary, and rendered unfit for conversion? And what must be thought of those, who, when this mismanagement became apparent, directed the cry of alarm and resentment against France, because, by pursuing a more provident course, she had, in a shorter time, and at less expense, attained more satisfactory results than ourselves? The following is the account of the tonnage built in the past year, and estimate for the year following:—

“It may possibly be remembered that, in proposing the estimates last year, we announced our intention, of course subject to contingencies, of building 46,000 tons of shipping in the dockyards. [Sir J. Pakington: ‘Exclusive of conversions?'] We said we would convert four line-of-battle ships, and five frigates, in addition. What we have actually built amounts to

19,730 tons in ships of the line, 13,654 in frigates, 5,436 in corvettes, and 5,224 in sloops and gun-vessels. We have not fulfilled our promise as to frigates, in which class I stated that we would build 16,000 tons, the reason being that there was an insufficiency of timber for the purpose; but we have made up for the deficiency in another way, for we have gone beyond our undertaking in the conversion of sailing into steam frigates and screw ships. What we propose doing in the present, or, as my right hon. friend reminds me, the ensuing financial year, is to build 13,216 tons of ships of the line, 13,500 tons of frigates, 4,871 tons of corvettes, 8,045 tons of sloops and gun-vessels, and 302 tons of gun-boats, making a total of 39,934 tons. In addition, we propose to convert four more line-of-battle ships and four frigates.” \*

The estimated constructions for the ensuing year are thus explained in ships instead of tonnage:—

“Supposing the Committee is pleased to consent to these estimates, we hope to add to the navy, before the end of the financial year, eight line-of-battle ships, twelve frigates, four iron-cased ships, four corvettes, fifteen sloops, and twenty-three gun-vessels and gunboats. That includes the conversion of four line-of-battle ships and four frigates.” †

It is impossible to deal with this proposal of the Secretary of the Admiralty, to add eight line-of-battle ships and twelve frigates to our steam navy, without referring to the part he had previously taken in opposition to the further construction of large ships, for he was the first and ablest opponent of the policy which he now followed when in office. So long ago as May, 1857, he expressed his opinion that line-of-battle ships were “not the instruments by which in future the fate of empires would be decided.” ‡ He then advised the First Lord to “rest upon his oars,” § and stated that “an *Enquête* or Commission was sitting in France to inquire whether line-of-battle

\* *Hansard*, clvi. 978.

‡ *Ante*, p. 588.

† *Hansard*, clvi. 969.

§ *Ante*, p. 589.

ships were or were not the most efficient class of ships which could now be employed.\* Every circumstance which has since occurred tended to confirm the views then expressed by Lord Clarence Paget. As each new experiment with artillery displayed the destructive effects of detonating shells, or of molten iron, even the oldest admirals raised their hands and exclaimed, "There is an end of wooden ships of the line!" The *Enquête* or Commission appointed in France was known to have decided against line-of-battle ships, for in the report upon the comparative state of the English and French navies presented to the House in 1859, it is stated that naval men in France "were of opinion that no more ships of the line will be laid down, and that in ten years that class of vessels will have become obsolete."† This had reference to the successful experiments in iron-cased ships.

But independent of this innovation, the opinion of the highest nautical authorities had been pronounced against the policy of exposing such a huge target as a line-of-battle ship, with perhaps a thousand men and thirty or forty tons of gunpowder on board, to the fire of modern shell guns. The Americans had abandoned these large ships before the iron-clad vessels were thought of, and it is stated that when their greatest authority, Captain Dahlgren, visited our ports more than three years ago, although he was much struck with the gun-boats, to which he devoted particular attention, he looked upon line-of-battle ships as all but obsolete, and considered that, as far as America was concerned, her naval policy "would render the construction of such vessels almost useless."‡ The condemnation of wooden ships of the line by intelligent naval men had found utterance in very emphatic phrases:—"They will be blown to lucifer matches," said one; "They will be mere human slaughter-houses," said another; whilst a third declared that, in case of two such vessels coming into collision, at close

\* *Ante*, p. 589.

† *Parliamentary Paper*, 182, 1859, p. 15.

‡ *The Navies of the World*, by HANS BUSK, p. 116.

quarters, the only word of command for which there would be time would be, "Fire, and lower your boats."

The comparative numbers of these vessels possessed by England and France deprived the Admiralty of every pretext for this increase. The Secretary, in his statement, informs us that we had at that time sixty-eight ships of the line, including block-ships, whilst France had only thirty-seven; and as Sir Charles Wood had stated the French force in 1857 at forty,\* and as they were put down also at forty in the report of 1858,† it was clear in 1860 that our neighbour had abandoned the further building of these vessels. All these facts were well known to our Government, when they were pushing forward the construction of large wooden vessels at a rate of expenditure unparalleled even at the height of the great French war. It will presently be seen that so manifest did the impolicy of this course at length become to everybody except the Admiralty, that the common sense of the House of Commons rose in revolt the following session, and extorted from the Minister a pledge to discontinue the further building of ships-of-the-line, and to abandon, unfinished, those on the stocks. The gigantic sacrifice involved in this outlay of public money will, in a very few years be brought home to the appreciation of the British public, in the possession of hundreds of wooden vessels of different sizes which will be acknowledged to be valueless and even dangerous to their possessors: and then only will be fully estimated the system of management which alone could have created such a costly monument to its own recklessness and want of forethought.

It is impossible to doubt that the Secretary of the Admiralty remained unchanged in the views he had expressed when in Opposition: indeed, any intelligent and unprejudiced mind must have become confirmed by experience in those sound opinions. Whilst extending to him the full benefit of that dispensation from individual responsibility which is claimed for

\* *Ante*, p. 587.

† *Ante*, p. 609.



those who become members of a government, it is to be desired, in the interest of the country—which has also its claim on the talents and judgment of public men—that some casuist, skilled in political ethics, would define the limit of inconsistency beyond which politicians shall not be allowed to wander.

The navy estimates, the unparalleled amount of which was accurately described in the brief protest of Mr. Williams, were agreed to without further opposition; and it is in connection with this fact that the reader is asked to regard the demonstration which now calls for notice.

On the 1st May, 1860, Lord Lyndhurst rose in the House of Peers, pursuant to previous notice, to call for explanations from the Government respecting the progress of the naval reserve, when he delivered a speech identical in spirit and object with that of the previous year.

Of the many voices that have been raised to agitate the public mind on the subject of our armaments, none has found a louder echo on the Continent than that of this learned peer. It is only the natural result of his high position and great ability. To him in the Lords, and Mr. Horsman and Sir Charles Napier in the Commons, and to the connivance of successive Governments, are mainly attributed, in France, the success of the invasion panic. “The motions of Lord Lyndhurst and of Mr. Horsman,” says M. Cucheval Clarigny, “the speeches and letters of Sir Charles Napier; the exaggerations, sincere or pretended, of the orators of the Government and of the Opposition, about the forces of France—all had contributed to create a kind of panic in England.” \*

Lord Lyndhurst had, on a previous occasion, resented the remarks of an adverse critic in the House of Commons, who had alluded to his great age. It must be allowed that his speeches invite no such allusion, unless to elicit, even from an opponent, the tribute of admiration for their great intellectual merits. The close and logical reasoning of his latest speeches,

\* *The Navy Budgets of England and France*, p. 69.

so free from the garrulity, or the tendency to narrative, which generally take the place of argument in the discourses of the aged, presents an instance of the late preservation of the mental powers for which it would be difficult to find a parallel. In conceding to him, however, all the authority which attaches to the possession of unimpaired faculties, he becomes divested of that privilege by which the venerable in years are shielded from an unequal conflict with other men ; and he must consent to be held amenable to criticism for his public utterances, and for the proper exercise of the influence which his learning and rank confer on him.

England and France had been at peace for forty-five years ; and, just previously, a treaty of commerce had been entered into, which was designed to strengthen the bonds of friendship between the two countries. Passing over this event, with a sneer at “the further exchange of pottery and cotton for silks and wine,” he seized this inopportune moment for going back half a century to disinter the buried strife of our fathers, and again to taunt our brave neighbours with their naval reverses. “The French navy,” he said, “was, by the great victory of the Nile, the victory of Lord Duncan, that of Lord St. Vincent, and the great and splendid victory of Trafalgar, reduced at the termination of the war to such a state, that for twenty years after that period we remained, as far as our navy was concerned, in a state of perfect tranquillity.” The aim of the speaker was to show that the restoration of the French navy was the work of Louis Napoleon. He must be allowed to be heard in his own language :—

“Such, my Lords, was the result of the efforts made during the great French war. Very little change took place until after the memorable event which I now beg to call to your attention, I mean the accession to supreme power of the present Emperor of the French. In the year 1848 he was elected President of the Republic ; and in the following year that celebrated Commission was appointed for the purpose of con-

sidering the re-organisation of the navy of France. That Commission was composed of fifteen or more of the most able men selected from the navy and from the civil service of France, and they have framed a code of regulations of the most complete kind, for the purpose of stimulating and directing the efforts of the French navy. I have stated one remarkable date with respect to the issuing of that Commission. There is another date equally remarkable. No report was called for from that Commission until after the celebrated event of the 2nd of December. About twelve or fourteen days after that *coup d'état*, namely on the 15th of December, a report was called for by Louis Napoleon, and from that time the most strenuous exertions have been made to carry all the recommendations of that Committee into effect." \*

Now, here are specific and tangible facts, which are not often found in speeches on this topic. In the first place, it is alleged that there was very little change in the relations of the English and French navies until after the election of Louis Napoleon as President of the Republic. It has been shown in the preceding pages that the French navy bore a much larger proportion to that of England during the latter part of Louis Philippe's reign than it has done since Louis Napoleon has been at the head of affairs. If the reader will give himself the trouble to turn to the tables in the first page, and compare the period between 1840 and 1848 with that between 1849 and 1859, he will see how much more largely the disproportion has been to the disadvantage of France during the latter than the former period.

Next, there is an allusion to a Commission appointed in 1849, the year after the election of Louis Napoleon as President, to consider the re-organisation of the French navy, and it might be inferred that this Commission was named by the President. It was, however, an *Enquête Parlementaire*, emanating from the National Assembly, by a law

\* *Hansard*, clviii. 425.

of the 31st October, 1849, at a time when Louis Napoleon had acquired no ascendancy over that body.

Then, we have the portentous revelation that this Commission had framed "a code of regulations of the most complete kind:" that no report was called for until after the 2nd December, 1851 (the date of the *coup d'état*): that about twelve or fourteen days after, "namely on the 15th December, a report was called for by Louis Napoleon, and from that time the most strenuous exertions have been made to carry all the recommendations of that Committee into effect." Now, this is not only an ingenious argument, but an effective appeal to our imaginations. Here was an ambitious man who had just thrown down the gauntlet to the National Assembly, which he had dissolved, and had appealed to the country to arbitrate between him and that body: and yet, while his fate was trembling in the balance, and it was still to be decided whether he should take a step towards the throne, or be again driven into exile, the one great dominant purpose of his life was never for a moment forgotten, the only absorbing thought of his mind was vengeance upon England! How deep and enduring must have been his hate, that, even whilst the vote by universal suffrage was going on, instead of thinking of the state of the poll, he should call for the Report on the state of the navy! The argument was worthy of the speaker in his best days in Westminster Hall; but, unluckily for the noble and learned lord, he departed from the usual vague declamation on this topic, and appealed to facts and dates. It is really almost incredible that a judicial peer, speaking in the highest assembly in the kingdom, conscious of the weight that would attach to his words, and accustomed to weigh and examine evidence, should have permitted himself to be the medium for making this extraordinary statement. These are the simple facts:—

The Commission, or *Enquête Parlementaire*, was, as has been stated, appointed by the *Assemblée Nationale*, on the 31st October, 1849. It pursued its labours for upwards of two

years, examining witnesses, visiting the dockyards, and calling for accounts and papers. The result of these investigations was printed in two thick quarto volumes, which we should call "blue books," comprising the minutes of evidence, and an appendix of official documents. The preface to these volumes, dated 30th January, 1852, gives a brief and simple narrative of the singular fate of the Commission, which was cut off, at the most critical moment of its existence, by the *coup d'état* of the 2nd December, 1851, when the National Assembly itself was dissolved.

It appears that M. Dufaure, the Reporter—or, as we should say in England, the Chairman—of the Commission, had read to his colleagues a part only of his Report, which was ordered to be printed, and to be distributed among the members previous to their deliberations; but, the preface proceeds to say, "This was rendered impossible after the 2nd December. Neither the Commission nor the Assembly from which it emanated could meet again. Its task, therefore, remained unaccomplished." It further states that "the whole of the resolutions of the Commission were only provisional, and on some important points they had not even deliberated:" and it adds, in conclusion, that, "If the Report should be published, with the documents which ought to accompany it, it will not have been submitted to the Commission; it will only be the production of the individual Reporter, who alone will be responsible for the opinions expressed in it."

Upwards of 200 "provisional" votes of the Commission are recorded in the minutes of proceedings. The first on the list, after the routine votes, and the most important as affecting ourselves, is a recommendation that the maximum of the number of line-of-battle ships should thenceforth be forty-five; namely, thirty afloat and fifteen on the stocks, and that they should all be furnished with screws. It was a moderate limit compared with the old naval establishment of France. "From that time," says Lord Lyndhurst, "the most strenuous exertions

have been made to carry all the recommendations of the Commission into effect." There were no recommendations of the Commission, for it never made a Report; but, so far was the Government from taking prompt measures to carry out the "provisional" resolution respecting screw line-of-battle ships, that in 1854, in the height of the Crimean war, the French had only ten screw liners;\* and Sir Charles Napier stated that they had but one in the Baltic in that year.† Indeed, it is now universally agreed, that it was subsequently to that period that serious efforts were made to convert the French sailing ships into a steam navy: "the great increase in the naval force of France," says a writer already quoted, "may, therefore, be considered to date from the Crimean war."‡

But the gravest inaccuracy in Lord Lyndhurst's statement remains to be noticed, where he links the present state of the French navy with the labours of the Commission of 1849. "The result of that Commission," he said, "and of the admirable system which was formed under it, has turned out to be a formidable navy—a formidable navy of steam-vessels, to which alone I confine my observations."§ He was clearly not aware of what had taken place subsequently to the untimely dissolution of that body. In 1855, a Commission was appointed by the Emperor's Government, to consider the organisation of the navy; and the result was a Report from the Minister of Marine, which was approved by a decree of the Emperor, in 1857, fixing the number of ships to be built, from year to year, until 1870; and this decree was published to the whole world. The line-of-battle ships were to reach a maximum of forty, instead of forty-five, as recommended by the resolution of the Commission of 1849. The Report contains the exact nomenclature of French shipping, with the strength of each ship in guns and horse-power. In fact, if it were not for the innovations which science is incessantly making, in-

\* *Navies of the World*, p. 88.

† *Navies of the World*, p. 89.

‡ *Hansard*, clv. 702.

§ *Hansard*, clviii. 426.

volved the re-construction of her navy, all Europe might know, from this decree, for nearly ten years to come, what ships of all kinds France would possess.

If we turn to that part of Lord Lyndhurst's speech which referred to the state of our own navy, we shall find that, instead of dealing with the Estimates of the year in which he spoke, he preferred to revive those figures of Sir John Pakington which had done such good service in the previous year. Leaving totally out of view upwards of 300 of our steam-ships of war afloat, ranging from corvettes to gunboats, all capable of carrying the heaviest guns, and the hundreds of large merchant steamers which would be available in case of war, and omitting all allusion to the great increase in our ships of the line and frigates during the preceding year, he thus proceeded to lay before his audience the state of our navy :—

“At the beginning of last year, our fleet consisted of twenty-nine sail of the line, and the French fleet of precisely the same number ; and, while we had twenty-six frigates, they had thirty-four.” And he added, with singular candour, that “what addition has been made to our fleet, since the commencement of last year, I am not informed.” It would have been only an act of ordinary prudence to have perused the speech of Lord Clarence Paget, delivered more than two months before ; or, at least, to have possessed himself of a copy of the Navy Estimates for 1860. He would have then learnt that England had 456 steamers of all kinds afloat, against 244 in France ; and it would have saved him from falling into the erroneous opinion which he expressed in proceeding to say, “I do not imagine that at this moment our fleet exceeds, or if it does, only in a small degree, the steam naval force of France.”

The object of the speech, however, was to show the danger we were in from want of seamen—a point on which the noble speaker would also have been better informed if he had perused the speech of the Secretary of the Admiralty, who had taken a vote for 85,500 men and boys, and had declared that more

seamen were offering than the Admiralty required. "In point of material," says Lord Lyndhurst, "that is to say in ships, you are far below the requirements of the country ; while, so far as the manning of the ships is concerned, you are in a situation the most deplorable. I do not mince the matter. Our position, in this respect, ought to be known throughout the country. No man ought to be ignorant of the real facts of the case."\* Now, considering that he was, by his own confession at the moment, in ignorance of all that had occurred in the navy since the previous year, this confident tone of the speaker implied, at least, a strong belief in the favourable temper of his audience.

And it was undoubtedly to this favourable state of feeling in the Peers that the success of these speeches, both indoors and without, was mainly due ; for they did not contain one fact that would bear the test of fair examination. The Upper House had, indeed, been the platform whence this invasion agitation spread throughout a large portion of the middle ranks of society. The Peers had made it fashionable to believe in the hostile designs of Louis Napoleon, and it became, to a certain extent, a test of respectability to be zealous in the promotion of rifle corps, and other means of defending the country. To contend against the probability of invasion was to take the side of the enemy, to be called anti-English, or accused of being for peace at any price ; nay, to require even proofs or arguments to show the reality of the danger, was to invite suspicion of want of patriotism. There was a kind of genteel terrorism exerted over everybody in "society," which, for a time, put down all opposition to the invasion party—which was tacitly understood to be the aristocratic, anti-radical party. This *animus* (reminding one of 1791) reveals itself in the speech before us in a manner which would have been to the last degree impolitic, if there had really been any danger from a foreign enemy, requiring "every class to unite in support of the honour

\* *Hansard*, clviii. 435.



and independence of the nation." In his concluding sentences, the noble speaker, who is too logical to have introduced such irrelevant matter had it not been to conciliate those he was addressing, protests against a reform of Parliament, and animadverted severely on those whom he characterises as being in favour of direct taxation, or desirous of introducing among us the social "equality, without liberty, that exists in France," or who are seeking "to pull down the wealthier and aristocratic classes."

The Duke of Somerset, the First Lord of the Admiralty, in his reply to Lord Lyndhurst, gave the following account of the labour which the Government was employing in the construction of those large wooden vessels which had been condemned as worse than useless by some of the highest naval authorities in Europe and America : \*—

"And I can say that during the last eight months more men have been employed in our dockyards than at any previous period of the history of the country. I do not even exclude the time of the great war, down to 1815 ; and in this statement I exclude the factories altogether, which form another great division of our naval establishments. I speak of the ship-building department only."

\* \* \* \* \*

"The noble and learned lord referred to the ships which we have now afloat. I find that we have built, and that there are now afloat, fifty ships of the line.

"*Lord Lyndhurst.*—Do you include block-ships ?

"*The Duke of Somerset.*—I am not taking the block-ships into account." †

The little question and answer, at the close of the above

\* Lord Clarence Paget had, a fortnight previously, stated in the House of Commons that "the total number of persons employed in the dockyards, on the 1st March, was 20,032 ;" and he stated subsequently (8th June) that "the greatest number employed during the great war with France was only 14,754."

—*Hansard*, clvii. 2014.

† *Hansard*, clviii. 438-9.

extract, illustrates the manner in which the coastguard block-ships are, by all Governments, left out of the numerical list of our ships of the line. It is true, they are sometimes alluded to, incidentally, as being fit for guarding harbours or mouths of rivers. But the question always recurs : seeing that these ships have the full complement of officers, the most complete armament, and picked seamen provided for them ; seeing that they have a fleet of fifteen to twenty steam gun-boats attached to them, besides sailing-vessels, and that they are all placed under a flag-officer—why, during the time when scores of good sailing line-of-battle ships were decaying in ordinary, were not some of them fitted with screws, and substituted for such of the block-ships as are alleged to be not fit for Channel service ? Some people will be uncharitable enough to suspect that the object is to have an excuse for another Channel fleet.

The following is the manner in which the First Lord replied to Lord Lyndhurst, upon the progress which had been made the previous year in manning the navy :—

“ The noble and learned lord says we have the ships, but the ships are not half manned ; but it so happens that it is just the contrary difficulty under which we have laboured. On coming into office, I found certain estimates prepared, and a £10 bounty in existence. I adopted these, and before the month of August I found that the number of men voted by Parliament was exceeded by 1,000. The news of the Chinese disaster arrived in September, and I did not think it was prudent, under these circumstances, to put a stop to the enrolment of seamen ; the result is that, for the last six months, we have been 5,000 in excess of the vote. This year we determined to cover that larger number by a larger vote, but they were still coming in so rapidly that I was obliged to come to the determination only to take able seamen, or ordinary seamen who had already served on board the fleet and been drilled to the guns. When the noble and learned lord says that, if we look to the last month or so, it will be found that

we were not getting men, of course that was so. The men we have are included in the estimates, and it was not likely I should be taking additional men when I had already 5,000 men more than had been provided for." \*

This statement completely cut the ground from under the feet of Lord Lyndhurst; but it did more,—it showed that the Government had no excuse for entertaining the question of a reserve at that moment at all. The formation of a reserve would be a legitimate measure in connection with a peace establishment; but our navy was not on a peace footing. Let the reader be good enough to turn to the accounts in the first page, and placing his finger on the number of men in the English navy in 1852, the year before the Russian war, let him run his eye back over the table to the commencement in 1835, and he will find only four years in the eighteen in which the seamen were *one-half* the number (85,500) voted for 1860; and the highest number on record in a year of peace previous to the Russian war was 44,960.

The French state their complement of men for 1860 at 30,588, namely 26,329 afloat, and 4,259 in reserve. But as the accounts for 1860 are not yet definitely audited, this *estimate*, as it may be called, is open to the objection which has been recognised from the first. It will be better to take an authority which will not be disputed on this side of the water. In the month of March following, Lord Clarence Paget † states the number of French seamen at 34,000, of whom 10,000 were from the military conscription, or landsmen. This statement was repeated by Lord Palmerston. ‡ The reader is now asked to refer to the accounts in the first page, and casting his eye over the table of men in the French navy from 1852 back to the commencement, to compare the 34,000 maintained in 1860 with the numbers in each of those eighteen years. He will not find an increase comparable with that in the English table. In more than one of those years the

\* *Hansard*, clviii. 440. † *Hansard*, clxi. 1774. ‡ *Hansard*, clxi. 1789.

number exceeded that of 1860, and in many years of Louis Philippe's reign the numbers approached very nearly to that of the above year.

The most important test, however, is the *proportion* of force maintained by each of the two countries, in 1860 and at former periods. The reader's attention is especially asked to this point, for it involves the whole question at issue as to the alleged responsibility of France for the great increase in our naval armaments. Turning to the accounts, we find, on looking down the two columns of seamen, that England generally had about twenty-five or thirty per cent. more men than France. In portions of Louis Philippe's reign the superiority was much less on the side of England. In 1840-41, for instance, France approached very nearly to an equality with us. Taking the average number maintained by France for the whole period of eighteen years down to 1852, the year before the Russian war, and comparing it with the average number maintained by England, they were 27,962 French and 38,085 English. In 1860, as we have seen, they were 34,000 French and 85,500 English. In other words, in the former period our navy had 10,123 more seamen than the French, and at the latter date the excess was 51,500.

But we are told that the Maritime Inscription gives to the French Government the right of calling upon the whole of the merchant seamen to serve in the Imperial navy. This power was, however, equally possessed by the Government of Louis Philippe. The Maritime Inscription is an institution nearly two centuries old. It is a register which comprises every youth and man following a sea life, or employed on rivers running to the sea, or working in dockyards, &c., who are all liable to serve in the Government navy. The number of available seamen is apt to be much exaggerated, owing to the large proportion of landmen included in the Inscription. The best way of comparing the naval resources of the two countries is by a reference to the amount of their merchant shipping.

England possesses at least four times the tonnage of France, exclusive of colonial shipping; and although the ships of the latter country carry larger crews than those of the former, on the other hand the English people take more freely to the sea for boating, yachting, and fishing than their neighbours. It is quite certain, then, that England has four times as many sailors to draw on as France, and against the power of impressment possessed by her, we must put the ability to pay for the services of our seamen which is possessed by England. If France has 60,000 merchant seamen from whence to draw by impressment the crews of her Imperial marine, we have 240,000 to supply the men for the Royal navy, in case of real emergency, by the equally sure process of voluntary enlistment for high pay.\*

Lord Hardwicke, who ought to be well informed on the subject, remarked, in the course of this debate, that "it was stated that the French had a reserve of 60,000; but he believed it was known to officers of their own fleet that not more than half that number was at any time available to man the navy. 30,000 trained seamen was, however, a most formidable force, &c."† But let us suppose the whole of these 30,000 men added to the French Imperial marine. Nay, let us even empty all the merchant-ships of their able-bodied crews, and suppose that 50,000 in addition to the present 34,000 were placed at the service of the French Government, and it would still leave the number less by 1,500 than the 85,500 men who had been already voted by our Parliament for 1860; and we

\* The following statement of the loss and gain by impressment made by Lord Clarence Paget, shows that it is a very unreliable mode of manning the navy:—"During the years 1811, 1812, and 1813, the closing period of the great war with France, there were pressed into the service 29,405 men, while the number of those who deserted was 27,300—so that the total gain to the country, during those three years, by impressment was 2,105 men. But, in order to bring those men thus compulsorily into the service, 3,000 good sailors had been employed on shore as press-gangs. Therefore the country actually lost about 1,000 men during those three years under the system."—

*Hansard*, cliv. 909.

† *Hansard*, clviii. 449.

were told that the men were pressing to enter the service faster than the Admiralty required them.

That, under such circumstances, a Government should lend its sanction to the cry of the alarmists, and pretend to be occupied in securing a reserve to protect us against France, was something like an abuse of public confidence. All this costly and complete preparation to meet some hypothetical danger implies a total want of faith in those latent resources of the nation which patriotism would evoke in the event of a real emergency. It has been frequently said by those most competent to judge, that, in case of actual danger to our shores, the merchant seamen, of whom about one-third are estimated to be always in port, would come forward to a man for the defence of the country.

The opinion of the seamen themselves on this subject was no doubt correctly expressed in a few words of manly common sense, quoted by the Duke of Somerset as the declaration of the sailors of Hartlepool.—They say, “We are doing well in the merchant service, and we do not want to be sent out to any of your little wars—to China, or the River Plate, or any of those places where you are always carrying on some small hostilities; but when it comes to a regular European war, we will take our share in it with any men.” \*

Such were the naval armaments of the two countries in 1860. England had added to her navy since 1857 nearly as many men as were contained in the whole marine of France. Yet during the spring and summer of this year the cry of alarm was still heard, and with a view to the greater security of our shores the Rifle Corps movement was actively promoted under the most influential patronage. Already it was announced that the number enrolled in the corps amounted to 130,000, and it was said that the foreigner had been impressed in a salutary manner by this martial demonstration. All this was, however, insufficient, and we now approach the climax of the

\* *Hansard*, clviii. 444.

third panic in the gigantic project for fortifications shortly to be initiated in the House of Commons.

A passing notice must be taken, however, of one or two of the little episodes in Parliament which reflected the nervous excitement of certain classes out of doors. Mr. Kinglake "had been informed that great preparations were being urged forward for the supply of horse transports on the north coast of France."\* Sir Charles Napier had heard from an American traveller that there were 14,000 men at work in Toulon dockyards, besides 3,000 convicts.† Both Houses of Parliament were simultaneously agitated upon the subject of a report which had appeared in the newspapers announcing that English shipwrights were finding employment in Cherbourg and other French dockyards. Numbers of artificers were crowding to the police magistrates to obtain passports. The subject was brought under the notice of the Lords by Viscount Dungannon, and of the Commons by Mr. Johnstone, the latter of whom said, "from information he had received there were at this moment between 1,200 and 1,300 of our skilled artisans employed in the French dockyards," and he added that "it was a very grave matter that some of our best shipwrights should be employed in building French ships."‡ Lord Clarence Paget replied that the regulations did not allow foreigners to work in French dockyards.

The Duke of Somerset stated in answer to the question in the Lords that the only vessel now being built in Cherbourg was a transport; that so far from the French taking on fresh hands, several hundreds of their own workpeople had been lately discharged; and that the British shipwrights who had gone there in consequence of the statements which had appeared in the English newspapers, not being able to find work, had "fallen into a pitiable condition, and bitterly repented their credulity."§

\* *Hansard*, clvi. 519.

† *Hansard*, clix. 209.

‡ *Hansard*, clviii. 1309.

§ *Hansard*, clix. 844.

“On the 23rd July, 1860, Lord Palmerston brought forward the Government measure for “the construction of works for the defence of the Royal dockyards and arsenals, and of the ports of Dover and Portland, and for the creation of a central arsenal,” when he delivered what was pronounced by Mr. Horsman to be “one of the most serious and alarming speeches he ever heard delivered by a Minister of the Crown in the time of peace,” and which he declared he had heard with “satisfaction.”\* This must be admitted to have been only natural, for Mr. Horsman found himself and his views in the ascendant. A Commission had been appointed (at the pressing instance, as he informed us, of Sir De Lacy Evans) to devise a scheme of fortifications, whose Report, now laid before the House and adopted by the Government, recommended an expenditure, spread over a series of years, of £11,000,000, but which the opponents of the scheme predicted would, according to all analogous precedent, result in an outlay of double the amount.

The most striking feature of this speech is, that it does not contain one syllable of allusion to the navy—for which nearly £13,000,000 had been voted this year—as a means of defending our shores.† The only supposition of a naval battle is that it occurs after the successful landing of a considerable force for the purpose of destroying our dockyards and “cutting up our navy by the roots ;” and then we are told that if any naval action were to take place, whatever the success might be, “our enemy would have his dockyards, arsenals, and stores

\* *Hansard*, clx. 565.

† “If the Secretary of the Admiralty keep a private diary there will be found, probably, inserted a commentary on this speech not unlike the following, made on a similar occasion by his predecessor in the reign of Charles II. :—

“*March 22, 1667.*—The Duke of York, instead of being at sea as admiral, is now going from port to port, as he is this day at Harwich, and was the other day with the King at Sheerness, and hath ordered at Portsmouth how fortifications should be made to oppose the enemy in case of invasion, which is to us a sad consideration and shameful to the nation, especially for so many proud vaunts as we have made against the Dutch [French?].—*Pepys' Diary.*



to refit and replenish, and reconstruct his navy, whilst, with our dockyards burnt and our stores destroyed we should have no means of refitting our navy and sending it out again to battle."\* There is then a description of our large exports and imports, "10,000,000 quarters of corn imported annually, besides enormous quantities of coffee, sugar, tea, and of cotton, which is next in importance to corn for the support of the people, followed by a picture of the consequences which would result from "such places as Liverpool, Bristol, Glasgow, and London, that is to say the Thames, being blockaded by a hostile force."

But not only is it assumed that an enemy has landed, but that an army is menacing the metropolis itself; and the fortifications of the dockyards are described as the "means for the defence of London, because they will set free a large amount of force for the defence of the capital by operations in the field," for it is contended that "if large forces are required to defend your dockyards you cannot concentrate for the defence of London that amount of force which would be necessary to meet an invading army." And again, "The only defence for London is an army in the field, and any means which enable you to make that army as large as your military establishments will allow are directly subservient to the defence of the capital itself."† There is not one syllable to indicate that we had at that moment a fleet with 85,500 seamen, whilst, according to the authority of the Prime Minister himself, the French navy contained only 34,000 men.

It must, however, here be stated that Lord Palmerston had a peculiar theory respecting the effect of steam navigation on our maritime strength, which he proceeds to develop. He contends that as long as the movement of ships depended on the chances of the weather, "and as long as naval warfare was carried on by means of sailing ships, we were in a position, by our superior skill and aptitude for the sea and for naval

\* *Hansard*, clx. 25.

† *Hansard*, clx. 25, 26.

combat to rest upon the strength which we then had afloat." And he then proceeds to say :

"The same difficulties which interposed in 1804-5 to prevent a large army drawn up on the opposite coast of the Channel from crossing over to this country continued to exist, and therefore successive Governments were justified in abstaining from any great effort for the purpose of artificial protection to our dockyards and other vulnerable points. But the introduction of steam changed this state of things. The adoption of steam as a motive power afloat totally altered the character of naval warfare, and deprived us of much of the advantage of our insular position. Operations which, if not impossible, were at least extremely difficult while sailing vessels alone were employed, became comparatively easy the moment that steam was introduced; and, in fact, as I remember Sir Robert Peel stating, steam had bridged the Channel, and for the purposes of aggression, had almost made this country cease to be an island." \*

They who have sat for the last twenty years in the House of Commons have observed, throughout the successive debates on our National Defences, the constant reiteration of the opinion, on the part of the Prime Minister,† that the application of steam to navigation has supplied greater facilities for offence than defence; that it has, in fact, deprived us of our great bulwark, by throwing what he has repeatedly called a "steam bridge" over the Channel. It has been remarked, also, that many other speakers have adopted this view, at the same time assigning to him the merit of its authorship. Thus, for instance, in the long debate on the Militia Bill of 1852, Mr. Walpole quoted this argument, as "so forcibly urged, on more than one occasion in the course of the debate, by the noble member for Tiverton;" ‡ and Lord Lyndhurst urged the same view, with a similar acknowledgment of its origin.§ It would, however,

\* *Hansard*, clx. 18.

‡ *Hansard*, cxx. 1176.

† Lord Palmerston.

§ *Ante*, p. 617.

be difficult to adduce the testimony of one eminent authority in favour of this opinion, whilst a host of naval officers and others might be quoted on the other side. Two or three examples must suffice:—

Admiral Berkeley, a Lord of the Admiralty, in his evidence before the Committee on the Navy, in 1848, said, “I believe, myself, that the power which steam has given us, if we make use of it properly, is the best guarantee we have against invasion, if we choose to make use of our resources, and organise those resources in the best manner.”\*

Sir Thomas Hastings, President of the Commission for Coast Defences, under Sir Robert Peel’s Government, in his evidence before the Ordnance Committee of 1849, expressed the same opinion, and almost in the same terms.†

The opinion of Sir Charles Napier was thus expressed:—  
“With regard to the effect of steam, it had been said that it made blockading impossible; but, on the contrary, he believed that steam had, for the first time, made blockading effectual; for with a steam fleet it would be impossible for the ships blockaded to escape without the knowledge of the blockading squadron, as they had done in former times, when they landed in Ireland, and when the great portion of the fleet escaped from Brest unknown to those who were watching them.”‡

Captain Scobell, late member for Bath, whose utterances on naval questions were characterised by a robust common sense, stated in the House that “he remembered being employed in blockading Boulogne, where the invading army of Napoleon was to have embarked, and his opinion was that this country was more vulnerable then than now, the agency of steam had done so much to strengthen it; for calms and fogs could have assisted the enemy much more then than now.”§

Sir Morton Peto thus gives expression to the scientific view of the question:—“We live in eventual times. The

\* *Minutes of Evidence*, 3850.

† *Hansard*, clx. 545.

‡ *Minutes of Evidence*, 5021.

§ *Hansard*, 1448.

future of any nation will no longer be determined by its courage alone ; science and its practical applications will decide our future battles ; and surely this should not be a source of weakness, but of strength. We have unlimited supplies of iron and of coal ; we have the best practical and scientific engineers. Our country has been the birthplace of the steam-engine itself. The rest of the world have copied us in its application to the thousand ways in which it has contributed to the advancement of civilisation and progress. It is a new thing that has happened to our country, that in naval affairs, instead of leading, we are taught by France and the rest of Europe.”\*

In a quotation given above from Lord Palmerston’s speech, there is a very curious error in attributing to Sir Robert Peel an opinion on this subject the very opposite of that which he entertained. It is a singular illustration of the fallibility of even the best of memories, that there should have been put into the mouth of that minister, in perfect good faith, no doubt, language, respecting a “steam bridge,” which he emphatically repudiated so long as 1845, when uttered by the very statesman who now assigned to him its authorship. The incident is so curious that, for correct illustration, the quotations must be given textually, and in juxtaposition :—

Lord Palmerston (July 30, 1845). “In reference to steam navigation, what he said was, that the progress which had been made had converted the ordinary means of transport into a steam-bridge.”†

Sir Robert Peel (same date in reply). “The noble lord (Lord Palmerston) appeared to retain the impression that our means of defence were rather abated by the discovery of steam navigation. He was not at all prepared to admit that. He thought that the demonstration which we could make of our steam navy was one which would surprise the world; and as the noble lord had spoken of steam-bridges, he would remind him that there were two parties who could play at making them.”‡

\* *Hansard*, clxii. 437. † *Hansard*, lxxxii. 1233. ‡ *Ibid*,

Lord Palmerston (July 23, 1860). "And, in fact, as I remember Sir Robert Peel stating, steam had bridged the Channel, and for the purpose of aggression had almost made this country cease to be an island."\*

The above citations, if they do not warrant the conclusion that the theory of steam navigation having rendered our shores more vulnerable to attack originated exclusively with the present Prime Minister, prove at least, beyond dispute, that, in the costly application of that theory to this plan of fortifications, he has been acting in opposition to the recorded opinions of the most eminent statesmen, and the highest professional and practical authorities of the age.

But to return to the speech before us. There is one striking resemblance between all the oratorical efforts on the invasion question, in their total omission of all allusion to the numerical strength of our own forces. If the reader will take the trouble to refer back to the speech delivered by the noble lord on the 30th July, 1845, when urging Sir Robert Peel's Government to an increase of our armaments, it will be found that our peril then arose from the existence in France of an army of "340,000 men, fully equipped, including a large force of cavalry and artillery; and, in addition to that, 1,000,000 of the National Guard."† The danger on the present occasion is owing to "an army of six hundred and odd thousand men, of whom four hundred and odd thousand are actually under arms, and the remainder are merely on furlough, and can be called into the ranks in a fortnight."‡ The million of National Guards of France had disappeared; but there is no allusion to the addition which we had in the meantime made to our own force of more than 200,000 volunteers and militia, besides the large increase of regulars.

But this characteristic omission will be more apparent in the case of the navies. In 1845, we were told that the French had a fleet in "commission and half commission" equal to

\* *Hansard*, clx. 18.

† *Ante*, p. 546.

‡ *Hansard*, clx. 22.

that of this country. We are now informed that "the utmost exertions have been made, and still are making, to create a navy very nearly equal to our own—a navy which cannot be required for purposes of defence for France, and which, therefore, we are justified in looking upon as a possible antagonist we may have to encounter—a navy which, under present arrangements, would give to our neighbours the means of transporting, within a few hours, a large and formidable number of troops to our coasts."\* To bring the statement that the French Government had been, and still was, striving to create a navy very nearly equal to our own, once more to the test of figures, let us compare the increase which had taken place in the two navies in the interval between 1847, the last year of Louis Philippe's reign, and 1860, the year in which this speech was made. The comparison is limited to the men, because, the definitive audit of the French accounts not being yet published for 1860, it will avoid all dispute to take the present number of French seamen on the authority of Lord Palmerston at 34,000,† although the French *Estimate* admits only 30,588.

*Strength of the English and French Navies in Number of Seamen,  
in the Years 1847 and 1860.*

	1847. No. of Men.	1860. No. of Men.
English . . . . .	44,969	85,500
French . . . . .	32,169	34,000
	Increase.	
English . . . . .		40,531
French . . . . .		1,831

It will be seen, by the above figures, that whilst England had increased her force by 40,531 men, France had augmented hers by only 1,831. If the French estimate of the number of their seamen be correctly given, which has not been disproved by any statement of facts, then the force maintained by them is actually less in 1860 than it was in 1847. Nor must it be

\* *Hansard*, clx. 23.

† *Hansard*, clxi. 1789.

forgotten that, in proposing the Navy Estimates, the Secretary of the Admiralty had informed us a few months before that we had 456 steamers afloat to 244 French. It has been shown, too, that our dockyard expenditure for wages in 1859 was £1,582,112, whilst in France it amounted to £772,931, or less than one-half; and, in proof that this activity in the Government yards had been unabated in 1860, it is only necessary to refer to the First Lord's statement on the 1st May, already quoted,\* that during the preceding eight months more men had been employed in our dockyards than at any previous time, not even excepting the period of the great war with France which terminated in 1815.

It must here be mentioned that this state of things led to the publication of a semi-official French pamphlet, in the summer of 1860, under the sanction of the Minister of State, with a view to expose the unprecedented and disproportionate increase of our navy, as compared with that of France. This pamphlet† contains a detailed comparison of the English and French naval expenditures, accompanied by elaborate statistics of their respective forces. The writer of these pages has, however, preferred to rely exclusively upon official sources of information; namely, the definitively audited accounts of France, our own parliamentary reports, and the statements of our official men.

Such were the comparative forces of the two countries when the speech under consideration was delivered. Englishmen had a perfect right, if they saw in the act no derogation from the attitude of their fathers—who boasted of needing “no bulwarks, no towers along the steep”—to ensconce themselves behind fortifications, in addition to a fleet of more than double the strength of that of France. It was purely a question of security and national honour, and in itself was not an aggressive

\* *Ante*, p. 650.

† *The Navy Budgets of France and England.* By M. CUCHEVAL CLARIGNY.

measure towards other countries. It was made an act of offence towards France solely by the speech which accompanied it, and which was an amplification of the invasion speeches of 1845 and 1851. The objects of the invaders were now more minutely described: they were to make a sudden descent on our shores: to burn and destroy our naval arsenals: and this not with a view to conquest, for the speaker "dismissed from his mind the idea that any foreign Power would dream of conquering this country with the view of permanent possession;" nor did he believe that an invasion would "ever be likely to be attended with permanent advantage to an enemy, except in so far as it might inflict injury on this country." The argument, in fact, assumed that we were in precisely the same state of insecurity as if our neighbours had been a barbarous tribe, whose actions were inspired by mere love of vengeance and plunder, without any restraining forethought or calculation of consequences; and who afforded none of those hostages for peace which are to be found in the possession of great wealth, or extensive manufactures and commerce.

There was a tone of assumed defencelessness on our part pervading the whole speech, which found repeated utterance in such phrases as, "You cannot, you are not entitled to rely on the forbearance of a stronger neighbour;" or, "For the sake of peace, it is desirable that we should not live upon forbearance, but that we should be able fully and effectually to defend ourselves." The speaker then assumes that a difficulty has arisen with some foreign Power, and says, "With the utmost desire that such matters may be amicably adjusted; yet, if one country is greatly the stronger, and another country greatly the weaker, it is very difficult for any arrangement to be made;" and then, that there may be no doubt which is the feebler party, it is assumed that "the weaker power consists of a high-spirited and patriotic nation, with free institutions, and with the popular feeling manifested on every occasion by means of a free press." Now, if such language had been



addressed to a people whose shores were really in danger from a more powerful neighbour, this would have been a legitimate appeal to their patriotism; but when it emanated from the Prime Minister of a nation whose ability to defend its coasts be was double that of its neighbour to assail them, such an attitude was very similar to what, in individual life, would be represented by a man, in possession of both his hands, taunting and accusing another, possessing but one, with the design of assaulting him.

There was a remarkable contrast between the present speech and those delivered by the same speaker in 1845 and 1851—a contrast all the more significant that he was now Prime Minister, whereas on former occasions he spoke only as an opposition Member of Parliament; namely, that it did not content itself with an abstract hypothesis of a possible invasion, but pointed to France as the menacing cause of actual danger. The cry of “Wolf!” had been so repeatedly heard for fifteen years, that it seemed as though it were necessary not only to name the wolf itself, but to depict the scowling aspect and crouching attitude of the beast of prey. The following passage leaves no doubt about the quarter from whence the attack was to be expected:—

“Now, Sir, as to the necessity for these works, I think it is impossible for any man to cast his eyes over the face of Europe, and to see and hear what is passing, without being convinced that the future is not free from danger. It is difficult to say where the storm may burst; but the horizon is charged with clouds which betoken the possibility of a tempest. *The Committee of course knows that, in the main, I am speaking of our immediate neighbours across the Channel, and there is no use in disguising it.*” \*

To appreciate fully the scope and bearing of these words, it is necessary to refer to the precise circumstances under which they were spoken. The speech was delivered on the

\* *Hansard*, clx. 21.

23rd July, 1860. At that moment, the negotiation of the details of the Commercial Treaty with France, upon the liberal arrangement of which depended the whole success of the measure, was at its most critical and important stage. The public mind was under considerable misapprehension respecting the progress of the measure, owing to the systematic misrepresentations which were promulgated in certain political circles, and by a portion of the press.\* The British ministry alone knew that, up to that time, the French Government had manifested a disposition to carry out the details of the Treaty with even unexpected liberality, and they could not have been unaware how important it was, at such a juncture, to preserve a conciliatory tone towards that Government. It was at this critical moment that the speech burst upon the negotiators in Paris. Had its object been to place the British Commissioners at the greatest possible disadvantage, it could not have more effectually accomplished the purpose. It cut the ground from under their feet, in so far as the French Government had been actuated by the political motive (apart from politico-economical considerations) of seeking to strengthen the friendly relations of the two countries as represented by their Governments. This plea of high state-policy, with which the Emperor's Government had met the complaints of the powerful interests which believed themselves compromised by the Treaty, was in a moment silenced and turned against itself. The offensive passages in the speech were instantly transferred to the pages of the protectionist organs, accompanied with loud expostulations addressed to their own Government: "You are sacrificing us," they said, "in the hope of conciliating the political alliance of our ancient rival; and now, behold the reward you are receiving

\* In justice to the newspaper press, which almost universally took a hopeful view of the Treaty, and gave a generous support to the negotiations, the notorious exception must be mentioned. The *Times* persisted in its attacks and misrepresentations, until silenced by the all but unanimous expression of opinion, on the part of the manufacturing and commercial community, in favour of the Treaty.

at the hands of the Prime Minister of England." These taunts resounded in the *salons* of the enlightened Minister of Commerce, and murmurs were heard even in the palace itself. A profound sensation was produced among all classes by this speech; and no other words could adequately express the emotions experienced by the French negotiators but astonishment and indignation. Had the Emperor seized the occasion for instantly suspending the negotiations he would have undoubtedly performed a most popular part; but on this, as on other occasions, his habitual calmness and self-mastery prevailed, and to these qualities must be mainly attributed the successful issue of the Treaty.

It is impossible to construct any theory of motives to account for this speech, consistent with a wise or serious statesmanship; and it probably met with the only appropriate commentary in the following remarks, which fell from Mr. Bernal Osborne:—

"At the commencement of the session I gave my humble support to a Commercial Treaty with France, under the idea that I was promoting good and substantial relations with that country. The noble lord (Lord Palmerston) has told us that we should not speak of this Treaty with levity; but his actions are inconsistent with his words, for the resolution before us is the oddest sequel imaginable to a Commercial Treaty. After taking off all the duties on French manufactures, we are asked to vote nominally £9,000,000, though I believe it will ultimately be nearer £20,000,000, for the construction of defences to keep out our friends and customers. Why, Sir, if this were not an expensive amusement, it would be the most ludicrous proceeding ever proposed to a deliberative assembly." \*

This project was voted by the House on the 2nd August, after a few hours' debate, in which scarcely any of the leading members spoke. Mr. Sidney Herbert, who took a prominent part in the discussion, declared that it was unwise in England

\* *Hansard*, clx. 553.

“to leave a great temptation—to leave her vast property and her reputation at stake, and at the mercy of any nation which may choose to send an expedition in consequence of some diplomatic quarrel;” \*—totally oblivious of the 456 Government steamers, the 85,500 seamen, and upwards of 300,000 armed men, including volunteers, then ready to meet an invading enemy.† This was spoken ten days after the delivery of Lord Palmerston’s speech, which had, of course, produced its natural effect out of doors, and to which Mr. Herbert could thus triumphantly appeal, in replying to Mr. Bright:—

“Is it not a fact, I ask him, that the whole nation is full of alarm and suspicion? The people feel that they ought to obtain security at any price. We have, therefore, spent a large sum in putting our stores and munitions of war in order. We have an increase of the army—not a large increase, it is true, but still an increase. All these things are cheerfully borne by the people, and more is called for—more, perhaps, than the Government are willing to do. Is not that an indication that there must, in the minds of an immense majority of the people, be some cause for alarm? The country feels that it is not in a proper state of defence, and that, if we deal with the question at all, we should deal with the whole of it if we can. Such are the feelings which I believe animate the public out of doors.” ‡

This is a fair illustration of the manner in which panics are created and sustained. A Government proposes a large expenditure for armaments, on the plea that France is making vast warlike preparations; and the public, being thereby impressed with a sense of impending danger, takes up the cry of alarm: when the Minister quotes the echo of his own voice as

\* *Hansard*, clx. 506.

† With a similar obliviousness of our own armaments, the Fortifications Bill was thus greeted by the Earl of Ellenborough in the Lords:—“I have, during the last thirteen years, endeavoured to draw the attention of this House and the country to the almost defenceless state of the realm, earnestly desiring that we should not remain unarmed in the midst of an armed world.”—*Hansard*, clx. 1563.

‡ *Hansard*, clx. 502.

a justification of his policy, and a sufficient answer to all opponents. This mode of argument was thus commented upon on a subsequent occasion by Mr. Bright, when replying to another speaker :—

“ But he knows perfectly well that what is called the country must necessarily take its opinions at second-hand. Manufacturers, farmers, professional men, shopkeepers, artisans, and labourers do not con over these blue-books of ours, and read the accounts minutely given in the French votes. They know very little of this. They take their opinions from what is stated in this House and in the public press. And, of course, when there are men of the high position of the noble lord at the head of the Government and others associated with him, who have been in the service of the country for twenty, thirty, or forty years, it is only reasonable that the opinions which they express, and the statements which are made in their hearing, but which they do not take the trouble to contradict, should sink into the minds of the people, and become with them a fixed belief, although founded upon no knowledge whatever.”\*

This gigantic scheme of fortifications is without a parallel in any single project of the kind ; and, judging by the analogy of Keyham and the Channel Islands, it may be predicted that, if allowed to go on, it will eventually involve an expenditure of double the amount of the original estimate. In the course of the debate Mr. Sidney Herbert stated that “ it was chiefly on the advice of Sir Howard Douglas that the Government acted in making the proposition they now made.” † Now, it is

\* *Hansard*, clxi. 1785.

† *Hansard*, clx. 562. It is one of the evils of our day that men are often retained in the direction of great national undertakings long beyond the period of life when they are considered eligible for employment in conducting private concerns.—Sir Howard Douglas was, when consulted by the Government on this occasion, in his 83rd year ; an age when men may be said to live only in the past, and to retain, for the affairs of this life, scarcely any interest in the future.

known that this officer entertained to the last a faith in large wooden ships, and even believed that sailing line-of-battle ships would play a part in future naval wars. He could form no idea of Portsmouth, Plymouth, and the other dockyards, but that which was suggested by the past appearance of their harbours, crowded with wooden vessels, some in commission or half-commission, some afloat in ordinary, and others in process of construction; with timber enough in store for two or three years' consumption, at the rate of thirty or forty thousand loads a year. The scheme of fortifications approved by him might be very consistent with these views.

But if, in accordance with the advice of Sir William Armstrong, Mr. Fairbairn, Sir Morton Peto, and other high authorities, on whose engineering skill the Government profess to rely, our ships of war are henceforth constructed entirely of iron (not wood cased in iron), and if they are built, as they will be if the country be wise, by contract in private yards, the "roots" of our navy will henceforth be on the Clyde, the Thames, the Mersey, and the Tyne, and not in Portsmouth or Plymouth. As for repairs, a vessel built wholly of iron four or five inches thick, will, like an iron bridge, be practically indestructible. With railroads running from the interior into all our dockyards, perishable stores for the navy may be kept at the Tower, Weedon, or other inland depôts. It is, besides, notorious that great waste and abuse of various kinds arise from the unnecessarily large amount of these stores kept on hand.

With the revolution thus glanced at now going on in naval armaments, it is possible that when the grand scheme of fortifications for Portsmouth, extending to the South Downs, is complete, to prevent the "cradle of our navy from being burnt and destroyed," an enemy will find very few combustible materials in that arsenal except the coal. Our dockyards will then possess, comparatively, only a traditional importance, unless, indeed, we adopt the dishonouring theory that our

fleets require fortified places in which to take refuge from an enemy.

The first proof to be offered by the Government, to whatever party it may belong, of the triumph of common sense in the conduct of our national affairs, will be the suspension of this panic-begotten scheme.

The speech of the Premier was calculated to give a renewed impulse to the agitation out of doors; but, owing to a cause which will be immediately explained, a reaction was taking place on the invasion question in the manufacturing districts, and the most exciting of the martial demonstrations which were witnessed during the ensuing autumn and winter occurred in obscure agricultural places. \*

During the negotiation of the details of the French Commercial Treaty, which extended over nearly the whole of 1860, deputations from our manufacturing districts, and from the metropolis, paid repeated visits to Paris, to afford information to the British Commissioners respecting their various productions. These intelligent capitalists returned to England impressed with the conviction that a great commercial revolution was being inaugurated in France; and this conviction

\* The following specimen will suffice to recall to the reader's recollection the scenes that were passing at the close of 1860:—

"DINNER TO MAJOR WATLINGTON, M.P. FOR SOUTH ESSEX.—On Wednesday afternoon, Major J. W. Perry Watlington, M.P., was entertained at dinner at Harlow Bush House by the members of the B troop of West Essex Yeomanry Cavalry, on his promotion from the rank of captain of the troop to the rank of major of the regiment. Major Watlington having thanked the company for the compliment paid him, and made some remarks regarding the character of the yeomanry cavalry and the volunteer rifle movement, proceeded to say that if this country were in danger it would be necessary to make preparation; but when such a man as Lord Palmerston, who had the command of all the resources of knowledge and information to enable him to know correctly the state of the pulse of the Emperor of the French, and tell rightly to what end each pulsation of that pulse tended, asked the House of Commons to grant millions for our defence in fortifications—when he pointed to the other side of the Channel, and held the Emperor of the French up as the bugbear, then it would be positive madness to doubt there was danger, and it would be culpable negligence not to be prepared for it. (Hear, hear.)"

found expression in the reports which the deputations made to their constituents. A natural revulsion from the state of panic followed. Reflecting men began to ask themselves if it could be possible that the most logical people were contemplating at the same time a policy of free trade and of unprovoked hostile aggression—that the Emperor, whose great intelligence no one disputed, could really be aiming at pursuing, in his own person, the incompatible careers of the first Napoleon and Sir Robert Peel.

But the warning voice of the Prime Minister, which still rang in the public ear, coupled with the gigantic project of fortifications, made even intelligent men pause in their final judgment upon the designs of the ruler of France. This conflict of public opinion induced several members of parliament to institute a personal inquiry into the naval preparations of France. Mr. Dalglish, M.P. for Glasgow, who had served on a Commission\* for inquiring into the management of the dockyards, visited France to examine the system of government accounts, and to inform himself as to the progress making in her naval armaments; and he took an opportunity of saying in the House that, “having been to Toulon and Cherbourg within the last fortnight, he could assure the hon. gentleman, the member for Norfolk, who appeared not to have got over the

\* This Commission reported as follows:—

The Royal Commission, appointed in 1860, to inquire into the management of the dockyards, report that the control and management of dockyards are inefficient from the following causes:—

1. The constitution of the Board of Admiralty.
2. The defective organisation of the subordinate departments.
3. The want of clear and well defined responsibility.
4. The absence of any means, both now and in times past, of effectually checking expenditure, from the want of accurate accounts.

“The want of accurate accounts,” seems to be a chronic malady at the Admiralty, if we may judge by the following penitent confession of the quaint Secretary, in the time of Charles II. :—

“Nov. 10, 1666.—The Parliament did fall foul of our accounts again yesterday: and we must arme to have them examined, which I am sorry for; it will bring great trouble to me, and shame to the office.”—*Pepys' Diary*.



panic about a French invasion, that all his fears were groundless, so far as the preparations connected with ship-building in those quarters were concerned." \* Sir Morton Peto, who had been largely connected with industrial undertakings in that country, despatched an intelligent agent to report to him the state of its various dockyards. Every facility for these investigations was afforded by the French Government; and the result was invariably to disprove the statements of the alarmists, and to corroborate the accounts contained in the semi-official pamphlet of M. Cucheval Clarigny.

Mr. Lindsay, M.P. for Sunderland, also visited Paris, and sought an interview with the Minister of Marine, to obtain information respecting the actual state of the French navy; and he was so convinced, by the frank and unreserved explanations of that Minister, of the erroneous impression which prevailed in England, that he communicated the information, in the first place, by letter, to Lord Clarence Paget, and afterwards to the House of Commons, soon after the opening of the Session. It seems, from the following extract from his speech, that the French Minister, imitating the example of his predecessor, M. Ducos, in 1853, invited our Secretary of the Admiralty (but in vain) to make a personal inspection of the French dockyards:—

"The Minister of Marine was anxious that the feeling of alarm in England on that subject should be got rid of. He said: 'I have shown you everything; I have given you official documents; I will do more if you desire it. Will you go and visit our dockyards and arsenals? I will send a gentleman with you, who will throw open everything to you, and you may see with your own eyes everything.' He (Mr. Lindsay) declined, saying that he was tired of wandering about; but the statement which he had received, confirmed by these books, was so different from what was commonly believed, that he had sent the figures of the Minister of Marine to his noble friend the

\* *Hansard*, clxii. 465.

Secretary of the Admiralty, and extended to him the invitation of the Minister of Marine to visit the French dockyards and arsenals. He had received a reply, in which the noble lord pleaded want of time and pressing engagements, but still seemed to entertain doubts as to the accuracy of the statements." \*

On the 11th March, 1861, the Secretary of the Admiralty introduced the Navy Estimates for the ensuing year. He stated, "that in consequence of the termination of the China war, the number of seamen actually borne in the previous year had not exceeded 81,100, being 4,400 less than the 85,500 voted; and he now asked for 78,200, which he considered to be only a reduction of 2,900 upon the force of the previous year. But," he added, "the House would be glad to hear that there was a force of something like 25,000 reserves, available at a moment's notice, if an emergency should make it necessary to man a large fleet."

With respect to ships, he proceeded, "We have expended during the present year, or, at least, shall have expended by the end of the month, no less than 80,000 loads of timber—more than double the ordinary rate of consumption," and he laid before the House the result in vessels: "We have built during this year 9,075 tons of line-of-battle ships, 12,189 tons of frigates, 4,138 tons of corvettes, 6,367 tons of sloops, 1,409 tons of gun and despatch vessels, and 102 tons of gunboats, making a total of 33,280 tons." He announced that, for the ensuing year, it was the intention of the Government to confine themselves to the construction of frigates and smaller vessels, adding, "I may further observe that, so far as large vessels are concerned, we are in a very satisfactory position." † At a subsequent stage of these naval discussions, he defined more clearly this position by a comparison with other countries, showing that we had seventeen more of these large ships (besides block-ships) than all the rest of the world. "We

\* *Hansard*, clxi. 1147.

† *Hansard*, clxi. 1747.

have," he said, "67 line-of-battle ships built or building. France has 37, Spain 3, Russia 9, and Italy 1, making 50." \* The nine coast-guard block-ships have again passed entirely into oblivion!

Bearing in mind that this prodigious increase in large wooden vessels had been going on after actual experiment had verified the success of iron-cased batteries in resisting combustible shells, it is really a waste almost unparalleled for recklessness and magnitude. It may be illustrated in private life, by the supposition that a large proprietor of stage-coaches doubled his stock of vehicles and horses at the very time when the locomotive and the railroad had entered into successful competition with the traffic of the turnpike-roads. A reaction against this policy now manifested itself in the very able opposition speeches delivered by Mr. Baxter, Mr. Lindsay, and Mr. Bright.

Lord Palmerston took a part in the debate. "The French," he said, "made no secret of their preparations; but when some well-intentioned gentleman asks them if they really mean to invade this country, if they really have any hostile intentions towards us, of course they say, 'Not the least in the world;' their feeling is one of perfect sympathy and friendship with us, and that all their preparations are for their own self-advancement." † And again, "Really, Sir, it is shutting one's eyes to notorious facts to go on contending that the policy of France—of which I certainly do not complain—has not for a great length of time been to get up a navy which shall be equal, if not superior, to our own." ‡

For the last occasion let us bring this statement that the French had for a long time been trying to be our equals, if not superiors, at sea, to the test of figures—not French, but British figures. In this very debate, both Lord Palmerston and Lord Clarence Paget give the French naval force at 34,000 seamen, which shall be accepted as correct, though the French *estimate*

\* *Hansard*, clxii. 442. † *Hansard*, clxi. 1791. ‡ *Hansard*, clxi. 1788.

is under 31,000. The Secretary of the Admiralty had, just before the Premier spoke, proposed a vote of 78,200 men for our navy for 1861. Now let the reader turn once more to the table in the first page, and he will seek in vain for any year (except 1859 and 1860, when the same noble lord was Prime Minister), in which our force was double that of France, or even approached to such a disproportionate strength. And it must be remembered that the French consider that the reserve of 25,000 brings our force up to 100,000 men.

But in order to test the statement, that France had been trying to get up a navy equal to our own, by a comparison of ships as well as men, the following extract is given from the speech delivered the same evening by the Secretary of the Admiralty:—

“He assumed that hon. gentlemen would accept the statement of the British navy he had laid before them as correct, and that showed that we had 53 screw line-of-battle ships afloat and 14 building and converting, making a total of 67. The French had 35 afloat and 2 building, making a total of 37. We had 31 screw and 9 paddle frigates afloat and 12 building, making a total of 52; the French had 21 screw and 18 paddle frigates afloat and 8 building, making a total of 47. He did not think that the discussion had extended to the smaller classes of steamships; but including them the French had 266 vessels afloat and 61 building, making a total of 327; while we had 505 afloat and 57 building, making a total of 562.”\*

Now let us take, for comparison, the large ships; for our immense superiority in smaller vessels has been admitted from the first. The constant cry of alarm has been founded on the assertion that France was attempting to rival us in ships of the line. The date at which we have now arrived, and when the speech from which the above extract is taken was delivered, is the 11th March, 1861. It is here said that

\* *Hansard*, clxi. 1773.

France has thirty-seven line-of-battle ships built and building. On the 18th May, 1857, nearly four years previously, Sir Charles Wood, then First Lord, stated that France had forty liners built and building.\* The same number is given for 1858 in the Report already quoted, presented to Parliament by Lord Derby's Government.† And on the 25th February, 1859, the country was startled by the statement of Sir John Pakington, that England and France were on an equality of twenty-nine‡ each "completed" ships of the line. What, then, has been the progress made by the French in nearly four years, during which we had the great invasion-speeches of Lord Lyndhurst and Mr. Horsman, the almost incessant agitation of Sir Charles Napier, the rifle corps movement, the unparalleled expenditure in the dockyards, the gigantic fortification scheme, and all on the pretext that France was making great efforts to rival us at sea? Why—It turns out on the authority of our own Government, that France had fewer line-of-battle ships in 1861 than she was alleged to possess in 1857. She had forty built or building in 1857, and thirty-seven in 1861, or less by three;—the French Government, be it remembered, state officially their number to be only thirty-five. Our own liners, which were fifty in 1857, were sixty-seven in 1861 (besides the block-ships), being an increase of seventeen. The number of French frigates is given at forty-seven in 1861, and they were stated by Sir John Pakington, in 1859, at forty-six,§ being an increase of one only in two years. Our own frigates were put down at thirty-four in 1859,|| and fifty-two in 1861, being an increase of eighteen.

It would be a waste of the reader's time and patience to offer any further evidence in a case which, having been subjected to so many tests, is at last demonstrated to be utterly groundless on the authority of British officials and our own public documents.

\* *Ante*, p. 587.

‡ *Ante*, p. 598.

† *Parliamentary Paper*, 182, 1859,

§ *Ante*, p. 599.

|| *Ibid.*

In the above quotation from Lord Palmerston's speech, the allegation that the French had for a long time been trying to equal or surpass us at sea, is accompanied by the remark, "of which I certainly do not complain." If such a design on the part of the French Government really did exist (which has been disproved), it would be a matter of grave concern, and even of complaint to the tax-paying people of this country; for with what legitimate or peaceful object could that Government be seeking to disturb the immemorial relations which England and France have borne to each other as maritime powers?

France possesses less than a fourth of our mercantile marine: she has not, perhaps, the hundredth part of our possessions to defend beyond the seas: she has more than double our military force; and, whilst her land frontier gives her access to the Continent, and thereby to the whole world, we have no means of communication with any other country but by water. She has, therefore, no necessity for, and no legitimate pretensions to an equality with us at sea; nor is there in her history any precedent for such a policy. If, under such circumstances, the present French ruler attempted for the first time to equal, if not surpass us in naval armaments, the reasonable conclusion would be, that either he had some sinister purpose in view, or that he was a rash and unreflecting, and therefore a dangerous neighbour. If, after the offer of frank explanations on our part, with a view to avert so irrational a waste, that ruler persisted in his extraordinary preparations, there is no amount of expenditure which this country would not bear to maintain our due superiority at sea. But such a state of things would be accompanied with a sense of grievance; and it would make it quite inconsistent with all serious statesmanship to attempt to unite the two Governments in alliances for peace or war in other parts of the world, until the vital question respecting our own security at home had received a better solution than is offered by the maintenance of a war establishment to protect us from an invasion by a so-called friend and ally.

The reaction which had taken place in intelligent minds against our injudicious naval armaments found expression in the House on the 11th April, 1861, when Mr. Lindsay, after an able speech, carried a resolution for putting an end to the further construction of large wooden vessels. The speech of Sir Morton Peto in support of this measure contains much valuable advice for the guidance of Government in iron ship-building, and Sir Joseph Paxton and Mr. Dalglish spoke with practical force for the motion. Not one word could be said, in any quarter, in behalf of wooden ships of the line; and a pledge was extorted from Government that no more of these vessels should be built, and that those still on the stocks should remain unfinished; thus tacitly admitting that the immense fleet of line-of-battle ships now afloat were worse than useless, and that if they had not been built under the excitement of the panic they would not now have been ordered to be constructed. This might be inferred from the remark which fell from Captain Jervis. "The shell," said he, "now acted as a mine; it burst in passing through the side of the vessel, and would so shatter it, that wooden line-of-battle ships would be nothing better than mere slaughter-houses."\* In fact, it is doubted by intelligent naval authorities whether, in case of a war between two maritime powers, wooden ships of the line would be ever subjected to the fire of modern shell guns.

We now arrive at the last, and not the least characteristic scene of the third panic.

On the 31st May, 1861, Sir John Pakington rose in the House, and addressing the Speaker, said, "Sir, I now rise to call attention to a subject the importance of which no one will deny. I have received information with respect to the French Government, in building armour-covered ships, to which I think it my duty to call the attention of the House and of her Majesty's Government without any loss of time." The right hon. gentleman then proceeded to say that he was about to

\* *Hansard*, clxii. 460.

make his important statement on the authority of a British naval officer of high professional reputation who, during the last three weeks had visited all the French ports and arsenals, with the exception of Toulon: but he weakened the zest of the coming disclosure by adding that Admiral Elliot did not wish to be under the suspicion of having acted as a spy:—"I should, therefore," said the speaker, "state that whatever information he has obtained was obtained in an open manner, and he visited the French dockyards with the advantage of having received the permission of the Minister of Marine. [Mr. Lindsay, Hear, hear!] I understand the motive of that cheer, and it is only due to the French Government to state that on the part of the French Admiralty there has been nothing like any intention to conceal its preparations." There is a curious resemblance in the tone of this speech to that which was delivered in moving the Navy Estimates of 1859; the same disavowal of the idea of alarming: the like absence of any exclusive information; and yet the apparent disposition to invest the whole proceeding with the character of a revelation. "I have no wish," he said, "to excite alarm by making this statement, I make it because I think it my duty to communicate to the Government and the House, in this public manner, information of so startling a character."

The statement thus heralded was, that the French were preparing to build fifteen armour-plated ships, besides nine gun-boats and floating batteries. There was not a word of information as to the precise stages in which these twenty-four vessels and batteries had been found; and it was admitted that some (it was not said how many) "were only lately laid down." Lord Clarence Paget\* spoke subsequently of nine having, during the last few months, been "laid down, or prepared to be laid down;" and, on the same occasion, Lord Palmerston† said the French Government were "beginning" to lay them down. No test of accuracy can be applied to the vague state-

\* *Hansard*, clxiii. 425.

† *Hansard*, clxiii. 535.



ments respecting those projected vessels; but the allusion to the *Magenta* and *Solferino*, two ships which everybody knew to be building as the companions to *La Gloire*, is more precise. "These two vessels," said the right hon. gentleman, "are to be launched in the ensuing month, and to be added immediately to the strength of the French navy." At the time when these pages are going to press (March, 1862), these ships are still unfinished, and are expected to remain so for several months. Throwing aside all dependence on the wooden fleets which the Admiralty had just completed, he proceeded, for the second time, to proclaim the danger of French maritime ascendancy:—

"Why are these preparations being made in France? I will not enter into the motives by which the French Government may be influenced in making such efforts. Every one is able to judge for himself for what ultimate end these preparations are intended. The point to which I invite attention is, that whatever may be the motive of France, the practical result is that we are rapidly becoming the second maritime power of Europe. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of this statement. Is it true, or is it not true? If it be true, what are the intentions of the Government?"\*

Admiral Walcott confirmed the statement of the preceding speaker, and said, "he felt quite convinced that a neighbouring country was at that moment in command of a most formidable number of iron-cased ships." And Sir James Elphinstone, also a naval officer, followed in the same strain, declaring that the report they had just heard "ought justly to alarm the Government and people of this country."

It is a curious feature in this discussion, that the alarm was chiefly confined to the naval officers; whilst those members who resisted what Mr. Dalglish designated as the "attempt that had been made by the right hon. member for Droitwich to startle the country," represented precisely those constituencies whose interests would be the most compromised by the loss of

\* *Hansard, ib. 417.*

the protection which our navy is designed to afford. Mr. Lindsay (Sunderland), Mr. Dalglish (Glasgow), and Mr. Baxter (Dundee), who had spoken previously, all represent important commercial seaports.

But to return to the question put by Sir John Pakington—"Why are these preparations being made in France?" There was not one of his audience so competent to answer this question as the right hon. gentleman himself: for, when he was First Lord of the Admiralty, he laid on the table of the House, on the 4th April, 1859, that Report on "The Comparative State of the Navies of England and France," to which allusion had been so frequently made—drawn up by his own confidential officials for the special information of the Government—in which the following passage occurs with reference to the future policy of the French Government:—

"It is stated that these iron-sided ships, of which two are more than half completed, will be substituted for line-of-battle ships. Their timbers are of the scantling of a three-decker; they are to have thirty-six heavy guns, most of them rifled 50-pounders, which will throw an 80-lb. hollow percussion shot; they will be cased with iron; and *so convinced do naval men seem to be in France of the irresistible qualities of these ships, that they are of opinion that no more ships of the line will be laid down, and that in ten years that class of vessels will have become obsolete.*"\*

With this document in his hand, the right hon. gentleman commenced, in 1859, with frantic haste, the reconstruction of our wooden navy, which was carried on still more frantically by his successor; notwithstanding that the Report of 1859 informed them that "no line-of-battle ship had been laid down since 1856 in France, and there had not been a single three-decker on the stocks since that year.† And now, on the 31st May, 1861, when, as Mr. Lindsay stated in the course of this debate,

\* *Parliamentary Paper*, No. 182—1859, p. 15.

† *Ibid.*, p. 19.

England possessed a greater number of efficient steam-ships of war than all Europe, and when the Secretary of the Navy himself admitted that we had seventeen more line-of-battle ships than all the rest of the world (besides the nine block-ships),\* the House was startled with the declaration that we were rapidly becoming the second maritime power of Europe, because France had one iron-clad frigate (*La Gloire*) at sea, whilst our own much more powerful ship, the *Warrior*, still wanted a few months for completion!

Now, let us see whether France had taken any clandestine or precipitate steps to justify her being teased and worried by such demonstrations as these; for it must not be supposed that the sensibilities of the French people are not wounded† by these imputations of sinister designs, reiterated by members of parliament who have filled the highest public offices. The value and efficiency of iron-clad vessels were proved (as will be seen immediately) to the knowledge of both England and France in 1854. England immediately possessed herself of double the number of iron-cased floating *batteries* built by France. The keel of the first *sea-going* frigate of this class, *La Gloire*, was laid down by the French Government in June, 1858. In the parliamentary report, dated January 6th, 1859, so frequently quoted, it is stated that this vessel is half com-

\* *Hansard*, clxii. 442.

† The following is extracted from an article on this subject in the *Journal des Débates*:—"Is there not something calculated to try the patience of a less excitable people than ours, to find ourselves constantly denounced as plotting an invasion of England—and denounced by whom? By those whom we have not invaded—by those who for three centuries have hired all the coalitions formed against us—by those who for three centuries have always marched in the front ranks of the invaders of our national territory. Is there nothing calculated to wound the just pride of a people, not wanting in self-respect, to find ourselves incessantly called to account respecting our navy—and by whom? By those who maintain upwards of 80,000 men in active service, whilst our fleet does not contain more than 35,000—by those who are actually expending, on an average, £12,000,000 sterling annually on their navy; whilst for several years we have been spending, on an average, 125,000,000f., or £5,000,000 sterling."

pleted. She made her first trial trip in August, 1860. And she was the only completed iron-clad sea-going vessel possessed by France on the 31st May, 1861, when Sir John Pakington made his startling statement to the House, and when terrified admirals talked of her possessing a "most formidable number" of these ships. There is certainly nothing in these facts to warrant the suspicion that our neighbours were endeavouring to steal a march on us in the construction of an iron fleet. Three years in the acquisition of only one sea-going iron-cased ship is surely a leisurely rate of progress, with which even our admiralty might have kept pace.

As there has been a systematic, and to some extent a successful, effort made by the invasionists to keep alive the panic, by attributing to the French Government secret and extensive preparations of iron-clad vessels, it will be well, before concluding, to add a few words respecting the origin and progress of this innovation in ship-building.

More than fifteen years ago, when the mode of projecting combustible shells horizontally was adopted, it was foreseen that the nature of maritime warfare would be entirely changed. In his evidence before the Ordnance Committee of 1849, Sir Thomas Hastings \* said that, in consequence of the adoption of Paixhan's guns, in case of an action between two fleets, "instead of lasting ten hours, its duration will be nearer ten minutes." Here, then, was a clear necessity for some contrivance to meet this new danger; and the objects to be aimed at, in clothing the ship's sides with iron armour, are very clearly defined in the following extract from a Lecture by Mr. Reed, formerly of Her Majesty's Dockyard at Portsmouth, and now editor of the *Mechanics' Magazine*:—

"It is time that all those who concern themselves with this great question of how iron may best be rendered available for the defence of ships' sides should recur to the circumstance which gave rise to it, and to the true end to be at present

\* *Minutes*, 5023.

attained. That circumstance, undoubtedly, was the introduction of Paixhan's shells into naval warfare; and the end desired is the application of means by which the entrance of those terrible missiles through the side of a ship may be avoided. The attainment of this end would leave us subject only to the entrance of solid shot, to which all our ships were exposed during the wars in which we won our supremacy, and from which no practical system of iron-plating can at present be expected to save us. The attempt to build ships which shall be proof to solid shot—at least, to wrought-iron solid shot—is an altogether illusory one; and such ships are not urgently required. It is as a defence against shells, and hollow charged projectiles generally, and against these only, that iron plating can yet be made available. By applying iron of very great thickness between wind and water, we may reduce the liability to injury by shot at that important part, and it may be well to do this; but if the upper works are made shell-proof, we can expect no more.”—P. 21.

The first trial in actual combat of these destructive missiles was at Sinope, November 20th, 1853, when the Turkish squadron was attacked by a Russian fleet, and when “their whole force of fourteen ships was, to a great extent, silenced in a few minutes, and utterly crushed in little more than an hour.”\* The Russians were well supplied with shell guns, while the Turks had nothing more effective than 24-pounders. During the progress of the Crimean war, an opportunity was afforded to our fleet of experiencing the effects of shells in the attack on the forts of Sebastopol, when some of our vessels were severely injured; and when the whole affair, which was lost sight of in face of the more absorbing operations on shore, was viewed with even less satisfaction by our navy than by the public. It was during this war, too, that the first trial of iron-clad batteries was witnessed at Kinburn. Our own batteries arrived too late, but those of our allies reached the scene in

\* *Lecture*, by Mr. E. J. REED, p. 13.

time to take a part in the siege. And Sir James Elphinstone, a practical authority on naval subjects, said, "When the French batteries, which had fortunately arrived, got an opportunity of acting at Kinburn, they showed that an iron-cased ship was impregnable; yet, after that, we spent three or four years experimenting on iron plates, while we had much better have been employed in building iron ships. We had, perhaps, found out what description of iron would stand hammering the longest, but the great fact of the impregnability of iron ships had been proved at Kinburn." \*

The invention of these iron-clad batteries has been attributed to the Emperor of the French. Mr. Scott Russell, however, tells us that the introduction of iron plates originated with Mr. Stevens, the great steamboat builder, of New York, who was in this country ten years ago, and who then communicated to him the results of some experiments that had been made by the United States Government with regard to these plates. And Mr. Reed, in his lecture, quotes an article in the *Mechanics' Magazine*, published in 1824, in which the writer, whilst noticing a memoir on this subject by M. de Montgery, a captain in the French navy, attributes the use of plates of iron or brass, for covering ships and battering rams, to Archimedes, upwards of two thousand years ago.

There is but little merit due, in any quarter, for the adoption of this very obvious and necessary reform in ship-building. Foreign governments might, indeed, very naturally shrink from an innovation which, by substituting iron for wood in the construction of vessels of war, would confer such an immense advantage on England; for whilst in the purchase of timber, and the raw materials of sails and rigging for our navy, we were only on a footing of equality with France, and were placed at a disadvantage as compared with Russia and America,—where those material were produced,—no sooner does iron take the place of wood, and steam of sails, than the change gives us a

\* *Hansard*, clxi, 201.

natural advantage over the whole world. The British Government did not, however, seem to realise this view; for instead of proceeding with the construction of iron-cased vessels for resisting combustible shells, for which purpose everybody admitted them to be perfectly successful, successive Boards of Admiralty amused themselves for several years with the comparatively useless experiment of trying to penetrate an iron target a few inches thick with solid shot; and this whilst the engineering and naval authorities were loudly proclaiming that it was for protection against combustion and explosion, rather than penetration, that the iron armour was required.\* A volume might be compiled of the letters in the newspapers, the pamphlets, and the speeches, not omitting a series of Lectures by Captain Halsted, which have been published, to stimulate the tardy movements of our Board of Admiralty.

In the meantime, the French Government have, for several years, professed not to lay down a vessel of war, intended for actual combat (as distinguished from *avisos*, transports, &c.), which is not designed to be clad in iron armour.

That portion of the naval expenditure of France set apart for dockyard wages and materials for ship-building, which was formerly laid out upon wooden vessels, will, therefore, henceforth be devoted to the construction of iron-cased ships; and—it being the practice, as we have already seen, for the Minister of Marine to take a long prospective range in the publication of his plans—when we are told that fifteen or twenty iron-cased vessels are to be built, it is merely an announcement of what will be the future production of the French dockyards, spread over a series of years. Seeing that this is only a substitution of one class of ships for another, rendered necessary by the progress of science, in what respect can it be said to indicate

\* At the late meeting of the Scientific Association, at Manchester, Mr. Scott Russell gave utterance to the opinion of nautical men in a brief and pithy sentence: "The whole practical part," he said, "was incorporated in one expression of a great sailor, 'Whatever you do, for God's sake keep out the shells,'"



hostility to us? Our Government does not pretend to be in ignorance of the course France is pursuing, or of the motives which decide her policy. We choose to pursue another course. Our Admiralty perseveres in building wooden line-of-battle ships, until compelled to desist by the House of Commons. Then "My Lords" throw all their energies into the construction of wooden vessels of a smaller size, having yet to learn that small wooden ships are as combustible as large ones. And then we are startled with the cry of alarm for the safety of our shores, because the French are said to be building more iron-clad vessels than ourselves! What can our neighbours do to put an end to these periodical scoldings, so trying to their national temper, and so lowering to our own dignity and self-respect? Nobody will expect the Minister of Marine to descend, with his eyes open, to the level of the wasteful mismanagement of our Board of Admiralty. His only hope of peace must, therefore, be in an improvement in our naval administration; and this is the view of the ablest writer in France on the state of the English and French navies, as expressed in the following extract from a private letter, written in consequence of the above incident in the House of Commons:—

"The great cause of the irritation, and of the disagreeable discussions which have taken place on this subject, I don't hesitate to say, is the ignorance, the incapacity, and the absolutely false organisation of the Board of Admiralty in England. Whatever increase of power the English may derive from it, I believe, in the end, it would be better for us to see something reasonable established in England, in place of that inactive, blind, wasteful, expensive machine, which is called the Admiralty, rather than to serve as the scapegoat as we always do, when they discover that we, not having fallen into all the blunders that have been committed at Somerset House, have obtained results which displease British pride, and which serve as a pretext for railing at our ambition; when, in justice, John Bull ought to blame himself for his own shortcomings."



“Rien n'est plus dangereux qu'un imprudent ami,  
Mieux vaudroit un sage ennemi.”

Before the close of the session, two incidents occurred which were calculated to impart renewed life to the panic during the recess. On the 19th July, Mr. Kinglake moved a resolution respecting a rumoured intention of the Piedmontese Government to cede the Island of Sardinia to France. Owing to the known views of the hon. member for Bridgewater, this motion would have excited little interest, had it not derived substance and validity from the speech delivered on the occasion by Lord John Russell, the Foreign Secretary, who, whilst in possession of the disavowals of the governments concerned, contrived to leave the public mind in doubt and uncertainty, by weighing probabilities, speculating on possible dangers, uttering hypothetical threats, and advocating the maintenance of armaments, with a view even to “offensive” operations, in certain undefined contingencies. This speech, which found a subsequent echo out of doors, drew from Sir James Graham, afterwards, the remark that, “Whatever alarm has been created resulted from the speech of the noble lord the Foreign Secretary, when the question of Sardinia was brought forward.”\*

On the 26th July, 1861, Lord Clarence Paget, Secretary of the Admiralty, moved for a vote of £250,000, in addition to the ordinary estimate, as the first instalment of an outlay which it was calculated would ultimately amount to £2,500,000, for building iron and iron-cased vessels, and for supplying them with machinery.

This mode of bringing forward unexpected supplementary votes, on the plea that other nations are making sudden additions to their navies, is admirably contrived for keeping alive a sense of uneasiness and panic. The present proceeding could only have been rendered necessary by the useless application of the estimates previously voted for the construction of wooden ships. On the 23rd May, a vote for £949,371 for

\* *Hansard*, clxiv. 1636.

timber had been carried by the Secretary of the Admiralty, in spite of the strenuous opposition of Mr. Lindsay, who described it as an unprecedented amount, and said that the sum voted the previous year had only been £722,758, and that for a long period of years, prior to 1859, the average amount did not exceed £350,000. This was, perhaps, the most extravagant proposition ever made by the Admiralty; for in the previous year the Secretary had declared that "it was the line-of-battle ships which required the large establishment of timber, for there never was any difficulty in finding timber for frigates, corvettes, and vessels of a smaller class."\* The further construction of line-of-battle ships was now arrested; the success of the iron ships had been established, and yet more timber than ever was wanted! Had one-half of the amount been applied to iron ship-building, there could have been no pretext for this startling supplementary estimate.

In the course of the exciting discussion which followed, Lord Palmerston said, "We know that France has now *afloat* six iron vessels of various sizes, two of them two-deckers, not frigates, all large vessels." And the Secretary of the Admiralty gave a list of nine iron-cased ships "*afloat*," including *La Gloire*. There is an inexactness in the word *afloat*, calculated to convey an erroneous impression. Iron ships are not launched with their armour on, but are cased in iron after they are afloat. This is a slow process. The keel of *La Gloire*, for instance, was laid down in June, 1858, she was floated in November, 1859, and made her first trial trip at sea in August, 1860. *She was the only completed sea-going iron-clad vessel at the time when this discussion took place.* To give the name of iron ships to the floating hulls of wooden vessels (sometimes old ones), intended at some future time to be clad in armour, is obviously an inaccuracy of language, calculated to excite groundless suspicion and alarm.

It has already been shown that the French Government

\* *Hansard*, clvii. 2029.

had abandoned the construction of wooden ships of war, and that in future all their vessels will be cased in iron. "We know," said Lord Palmerston, "that they have laid down lately the keels, and made preparations to complete ten other iron vessels of considerable dimensions. The decision as to these vessels was taken as far back as December last, but was not carried into effect until May, because they were waiting to ascertain what were the qualities and the character of *La Gloire* and other ships afloat." And he added, "there is no illusion about them, for we know their names and the ports at which they are being built."\* In the course of the debate Lord C. Paget gave a list of these vessels. All this proved the very opposite of concealment or suddenness of determination on the part of the French Government, and that they were pursuing precisely the same course with iron as they had done with wooden ships. It has been seen that in 1857, consequent on the report of the Commission appointed in 1855, the French Government published a programme of their future naval constructions, with the nomenclature of all the vessels in their intended fleet, extending over a period of twelve years. The progress of science had rendered it necessary to substitute iron for wooden ships, and again the plans of the Minister of Marine are fixed for a series of years, and the whole world is acquainted with his plans. The marvel is at the ingenuity with which our statesmen could find anything in these proceedings with which to produce an evenings sensation in the House of Commons.

But the most remarkable incident in this debate remains to be noticed. Mr. Disraeli on this, as on a former occasion, recommended an arrangement between the English and French Governments for putting some limit to this naval rivalry, asking, "What is the use of diplomacy? What is the use of governments? What is the use of cordial understandings if such things can take place?"† There is a vacant niche in the

\* *Hansard*, clxiv. 1672, 1673.

† *Hansard*, cxliv. 1679.

Temple of Fame for the ruler or minister who shall be the first to grapple with this monster evil of the day. "Whatsoever nation," says Jeremy Bentham, "should get the start of the other in making the proposal to reduce and fix the amount of its armed force would crown itself with everlasting honour."

On the 28th of August, 1861, on the occasion of a mediæval holiday ceremonial, the Prime Minister stood on the heights of Dover, surrounded by a force of regular troops, sailors, and volunteers, when, reviving the reminiscences of the projected invasion from the opposite coast more than half a century ago, he made an eloquent appeal to the volunteers of England to improve and perpetuate their organisation. There was no one in the United Kingdom, or in Europe, who, in perusing his speech, doubted the Power to which allusion was made when he said, "We accept with frankness the right hand of friendship wherever it is tendered to us. We do not distrust that proffered right hand because we see the left hand grasping the hilt of the sword. But when that left hand plainly does so grasp the hilt of the sword it would be extreme folly in us to throw away our shield of defence."

In the last week of November, 1861, news reached England that Captain Wilks, of the American navy, falling into the error, not uncommon to men on land or sea, of constituting himself his own lawyer, had carried off four American citizens from the deck of a British vessel in violation of international law. During the period intervening between the arrival of this intelligence and the time when an explanation could be received from the government at Washington, the party who had for years been the promoters of the invasion panics sounded the tocsin of alarm at the prospect of a war with America. The circumstances of the case were certainly not favourable to the alarmists. The people of the United States were plunged in civil war, and the President, beleaguered at Washington, had demanded half a million of men to defend the Union against nearly as large a force of Confederates. The Federal Govern-

ment had, therefore, every possible motive for wishing to avoid a rupture with England. To meet this objection the alarmists had recourse to an expedient which had been employed in the case of the French invasion panic. A theory was invented which the credulous were expected to accept for a fact. Nay, two or three theories were propounded which were in direct contradiction to each other. In the case of France it was one day the Emperor whose blind "destiny" was to hurl him on our shores, the next day we were told that his wise and pacific policy would be overruled by the army and the populace.

In the case of America, we were asked one day to believe that Mr. Seward (who possesses no more power or responsibility under the American Constitution than one of President Lincoln's clerks) had a long-cherished scheme for closing the war with the South and turning it against Canada. The next day we were informed that the government at Washington was disposed for peace, but that it would be overruled by the "mob."\* These assumptions furnished the ground for warlike prognostications and for appeals to the combative passions of our people throughout the month of December. Meantime it is more important to consider the course pursued by the British Government.

A despatch, courteously worded, dated November 30, 1861, was forwarded by the British Cabinet to Washington, expressing the belief that Captain Wilks had acted without the authority of his Government, and requiring the surrender of the captured envoys. It was calculated that an answer to this despatch

\* The writer, who has twice visited the United States at an interval of twenty-four years, and travelled through nearly the whole of the free States, never saw any mob there except that which had been imported from Europe. In a few of the large cities, where foreign immigrants are very numerous, they constitute an embarrassment in the working of the municipal governments, owing to their inaptitude for the proper discharge of the duties of free citizens. But this foreign element exercises no sway over the policy of the Federal Government at Washington, or even of the separate State legislatures. The United States, like England, is governed by landowners, with this difference, that they are numbered by thousands in one country and by millions in the other.

could be received in about a month. It arrived, in fact, on the 9th January. It is to this interval of six weeks that the following statement of facts applies. On the 3rd December, three days after the date of the British despatch, the French Government forwarded a communication through their minister at Washington expressing their disapproval of the act of Captain Wilks, accompanied by the courteous intimation that all the neutral powers were interested in the disavowal of the proceeding on the part of the United States Government. This despatch was formally communicated to the British Government on the 6th December. On the 19th December Mr. Adams, the American Minister, waited on our Foreign Minister to say that "no instructions were given to Captain Wilks to authorise him to act in the manner he had done; neither had the United States Government committed itself with regard to any decision upon the character of that act. The Government would wait for any representation the British Government might make before coming to any positive decision." On the 18th December the Austrian, and on the 25th the Prussian Government, sent despatches to Washington supporting the claim of the British Government. The Russian Ambassador in London wrote to his colleague at Washington condemning the conduct of Captain Wilks, and this was confirmed by the Russian Government. These proceedings of the three great powers were immediately made known to the British Government."\*

This was tantamount to the Arbitrators giving judgment in our favour before they were called on for their award; and, as it was known to our Cabinet (but concealed from the public), that the President's Government had not authorised the act of Captain Wilks, the chances of war were removed almost beyond the bounds of possibility. There was thus every motive for awaiting in calm confidence the reply from Washington. It

\* These extracts and dates are taken from the *Parliamentary Paper*, "North America," No. 3, 1862.

was but a question of a month or six weeks. Even if the Congress of the United States, which alone can declare war, had, without debate, thrown down the gauntlet to Europe, a campaign in the depth of winter is as impracticable on the frontiers of Canada as in the Gulf of Finland. So long as peace continued, a Convention remained in force between the two countries which prevented any addition being made to the armaments on the Lakes which separate the United States from Canada, until after six months' notice; and the highest military authority\* has declared that the fate of a war in that region will depend on the superiority upon the Lakes.

All this, however, did not prevent our Government from employing the interval between the 30th November and the 9th January in hurrying forward preparations for war, as though an immediate rupture were all but inevitable. The country was startled by the instant appearance of a proclamation, prohibiting the exportation of the munitions of war. Expedition after expedition was despatched across the Atlantic. In three weeks, as we were afterwards informed by the Secretary of the Admiralty, from 10,000 to 11,000 troops were on their way to America, and our naval force on that station was nearly doubled.

These proceedings were trumpeted to the world, amid cries of exultation, by the organs of the invasion party, not one of whom seemed to occupy himself for a moment with the reflection that we were exposing our flank to an attack from that formidable neighbour against whose menacing attitude, even whilst extending the right hand of friendship, we had been so eloquently warned from the heights of Dover. This is the more remarkable, when we recollect that the Report of the Commission on Fortifications had completely laid bare all our weak places, and had drawn from Sir Charles Napier a cry of alarm:—"And what," he exclaimed, "were we to do while these fortifications were building? Would the French wait

\* The Duke of Wellington.

three years before they went to war, while we built our fortifications? \* \* \* \* The Commissioners ought to be brought to trial for high treason, seeing that they pointed out to the Emperor of the French all the possible places at which he might land an army." \*

The difficulty in which we found ourselves, when under the sudden necessity of providing warm clothing for our troops, brought the disposition of the French Emperor to a singular test. Such is the severity of the winter in Canada, that sentries are often obliged to be relieved every half hour to avoid being frozen, and there is frequently a fall of seven feet of snow during the season. For such a rigorous climate, a corresponding equipment of clothing was indispensable. Among other articles of necessity were long boots, in which we found ourselves deficient. The following little incident must be given in the words of Sir G. C. Lewis, the Secretary for War, delivered in the House of Commons, on the 17th February, 1862, and, as it is taken from the newspaper report of the speech, the expressions of feeling, as they were elicited from the House, are also retained :—

“There was one article that was not used by any of our regiments, and which was not in store in this country—the article of long boots. The French Government, having been informed of our difficulty, undertook the supply of 1,500 pairs of boots, which came over in forty-eight hours from Paris (cheers), and at a cost for which they could scarcely have been obtained from our contractors. (Hear, hear).”

And thus ends the third panic!

It has been demonstrated in the preceding pages, by evidence drawn from our own official statements, totally irrespective of the French accounts, that, as a nation, we have borne false witness against our neighbours: that, without a shadow of proof or justification, we have accused them,



repeatedly, during a long series of years, of meditating an unprovoked attack on our shores, in violation of every principle of international law, and in contempt of all the obligations of morality and honour.

This accusation involves an impeachment of the intelligence as well as the honour of France. In attributing to the government of that country the design of entering into a naval war with England, and especially in a clandestine or secret manner, we have placed them on a par, for intelligence, almost, with children. There is not a statesman in France who does not know, and admit, that to provoke a contest with England, single-handed, for the supremacy of the seas, would be to embark in a hopeless struggle; and this not so much owing to our superiority in government arsenals—where notorious mismanagement countervails our advantages—as to the vast and unrivalled resources we possess in private establishments for the construction of ships and steam-machinery.

In inquiring into the origin of these panics, it would be folly to conceal from ourselves that they have been sometimes promoted by those who have not themselves shared in the delusion. Personal rancour, professional objects, dynastic aims, the interests of party, and other motives, may have played their part. But successive governments have rendered themselves wholly responsible for the invasion panics, by making them the plea for repeated augmentations of our armaments. It is this which has impressed the public mind with a sense of danger, and which has drawn the youth of the middle class from civil pursuits, to enrol themselves for military exercises—a movement not the less patriotic because it originated in groundless apprehensions.

If the people of this country would offer a practical atonement to France, and at the same time secure for themselves an honourable relief from the unnecessary burdens which their governments have imposed on them, they should initiate a frank proposal for opening negotiations between the two

governments, with the view of agreeing to some plan for limiting their naval armaments. This would, undoubtedly, be as acceptable to our neighbours as it would be beneficial to ourselves. It would tend to bring the attitude of the French Government into greater harmony with its new commercial policy, and thus save it from a repetition of those taunts with which it was, with some logical force, assailed, a few weeks ago, by M. Pouyer-Quertier, the leader of the Protectionists in the *Corps Legislatif*:—

“If, indeed,” said he, “in exchange for the benefits you have conceded to England, you had only established a firmer and more faithful alliance! Had you been only able to effect a saving in your military and naval expenditure! But see what is passing in England, where they are pushing forward, without measure, their armaments. \* \* \* \* \* Can we be said to be at peace while our coasts are surrounded with British gun-boats, and with iron-cased vessels? Are these the fruits of the alliance—these the results of that *entente cordiale* on which you calculated as the price of your concessions? Let the free-trade champions answer me. The Treaty has not only inflicted on us commercial losses, but its effects are felt in our budget as a financial disaster. The measures of the English Government compel you to increase your armaments, and thus deprive us of all hope of retrenchment.”

It must be remembered that such is the immense superiority of our navy at the present time—so greatly does it surpass that relative strength which it was formerly accustomed to bear in comparison with the navy of France—that it devolves on us, as a point of honour, to make the first proposal for an attempt to put a limit to this most irrational and costly rivalry of armaments.

Should such a step lead to a successful result, we must not be surprised if the parties who have been so long employed in promoting jealousy and discord between this country and France should seek for congenial occupation in envenoming.

our relations with America, or elsewhere. There is but one way of successfully dealing with these alarmists. Speaking in 1850, at the close of his career, the most cautious and sagacious of our statesmen said, "I believe that, in time of peace, we must, by our retrenchment, *consent to incur some risk*.\* I venture to say that, if you choose to have all the garrisons of all your colonial possessions in a complete state, and to have all your fortifications secure against attack, no amount of annual expenditure will be sufficient to accomplish your object."

If, hereafter, an attempt be made, on no better evidence than that which has been subjected to analysis in the preceding pages, to induce us to arm and fortify ourselves against some other power, it is hoped that, remembering the enormous expense we have incurred to insure ourselves against imaginary dangers from France, we shall meet all such attempts to frighten us with the words of Sir Robert Peel, "We consent to incur some risk."

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NOTE.—We may, perhaps, be permitted to add a few words of explanation of a personal nature. The writer took a part, both in the House and out of doors, in opposition to the first two panics, and to the expenditure to which it was attempted to make them subservient. At the dissolution, in the spring of 1857, consequent on the vote of the House against the China war, he was not returned to Parliament; but was elected for Rochdale during his absence in America, and took his seat on his return home, in June, 1859. In the following autumn he went to France, and remained there, and in Algiers, till May, 1861. The only occasion on which he spoke in the House, during the interval between the spring of 1857 and that of 1861, was in opposition to Mr. Horsman's fortification motion, on the 31st July, 1859; when he gave expression, at some length, to many of the views contained in this pamphlet, and when he analysed the contents of the *Parliamentary Paper*, No. 182, 1859, to which reference has been so frequently made.

\* *Hansard*, cix. 766.

## APPENDIX.

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SINCE the preceding pages were written, the news of the single combat between the two American iron-clad vessels, the *Monitor* and the *Merri-mac*, has reached this country, and has been followed by something like an attempt to create an *American* invasion panic. Again the cry has arisen, from the old quarters, for precipitate preparations; and again, as in the case of France, there is a disposition to forget all that we have already done. The United States Government, being actually at war, have, we are told, determined to spend fifteen million dollars on armour-cased vessels. England, being at peace, has already incurred, or committed herself to, a much larger expenditure for the same purpose. As nearly the whole of the projected outlay in America is for gunboats, or coast batteries, and not for vessels adapted for crossing the Atlantic, there is nothing in these preparations that is menacing to Europe; and we may, therefore, wait in safety whilst the Americans are subjecting to the test of actual warfare the rival powers of artillery and iron shields. Under the intense stimulus now imparted to the mechanical genius of that inventive people, every month will probably witness the production of some new contrivance for aggression or defence; and should the civil war unhappily continue, it may not improbably lead to discoveries which will supersede existing armaments altogether.

Meantime, the experience which we have already gained from this deplorable contest has proved that our existing wooden fleet is worse than useless, that it is absolutely dangerous. When, in the pursuits of private industry, a manufacturing capitalist discovers that his machinery has been superseded by new inventions, and that he can only continue to work it at a serious loss, he does not hesitate at once to throw it aside, however cautious he may be in making choice of a new investment to replace it. Precisely the same principle is applicable to nations.

The following Memorandum, which was forwarded to the Prime Minister in October last,\* will probably be thought, in some quarters, to have acquired increased force from the late American news.

### MEMORANDUM.

“The present peculiar and exceptional state of the English and French navies, the result of scientific progress in maritime armaments, offers an

\* [This was written early in 1862.]

opportunity for a reciprocal arrangement between the two governments, of the highest interest to both countries.

“During the last century, and down almost to the present day, the relative naval strength of the two countries has been measured by the number of their line-of-battle ships. But owing to the recent improvements in explosive shells, and other combustible missiles, and in the modes of projecting them, these large vessels have been pronounced, by competent judges, no longer suited for maritime warfare ; and warning voices have even proclaimed that they will henceforth prove only a snare to those who employ them.

“This opinion has found utterance in several emphatic phrases.

“‘ Wooden ships of the line,’ says one, ‘ will, in a future naval war, be nothing but human slaughter houses.’ ‘ They will be blown to lucifer matches,’ says another. A third authority tells us that, in case of a collision between two such vessels at close quarters, the only words of command for which there will be time, will be, ‘ Fire, and lower your boats !’ Whilst a fourth declares that ‘ any government that should send such a vessel into action against an iron-plated ship would deserve to be impeached.

“It hardly required such a weight of evidence to convince us that to crowd nearly a thousand men upon a huge wooden target, with thirty or forty tons of gunpowder at their feet, and expose them to a bombardment with detonating shells and other combustible projectiles, must be a very suicidal proceeding.

“The governments of the great maritime States have shown that they share this opinion, by abandoning the construction of line-of-battle ships.

“America, several years since, gave the preference to long, low vessels, possessing the utmost possible speed, and being capable of carrying the largest guns.

“France was the next to cease building ships of the line.

“The British Government have come to the same decision ; and they gave a pledge last session, with the approval of Parliament, that they would not complete the vessels of this class which were unfinished on the stocks.

“It is under these circumstances that the two countries find themselves in possession of about one hundred wooden ships of the line with screw propellers. England has between sixty and seventy, and France between thirty and forty of these vessels, the greater part of them in commission ; and their maintenance constitutes one of the principal items in the naval expenditure of the two countries.

“It will be admitted that if these vessels did not exist they would not now be constructed, and that when worn out they will not be renewed. It

is equally indisputable that they have been built by the two governments with a view to preserve a certain relative force towards each other.

“In proof that this rivalry has been confined exclusively to England and France, it may be stated, on the authority of the official representative of the Admiralty in the House of Commons, that Spain has only three, Russia nine, and Italy one, of this class of ships. America has only one.

“These circumstances suggest, as an obvious course to the two governments, that they should endeavour to come to an amicable agreement by which the greater portion of these ships might be withdrawn, and so disposed of as to be rendered incapable of being again employed for warlike purposes. This might be effected by an arrangement which should preserve to each country precisely the same relative force after the reduction as before. For instance, assuming, merely for the sake of argument, England to possess sixty-five, and France thirty-five, then for every seven withdrawn by France, England should withdraw thirteen; and thus, to whatever extent the reduction was carried, provided this proportion were preserved, the two countries would still possess the same relative force. The first point on which an understanding should be come to is as to the number of ships of the line actually possessed by each—a very simple question, inasmuch as it is not complicated by the comparison of vessels in different stages of construction. Then, the other main point is to agree upon a plan for making a fair selection, ship for ship, so that the withdrawals on both sides may be as nearly as possible of corresponding size or value. If the principle of a proportionate reduction be agreed to, far fewer difficulties will be found in carrying out the details than must have been encountered in arranging the plans of co-operation in the Crimean and Chinese wars, or in settling the details of the Commercial Treaty.

“And is this principle of reciprocity, in adjusting the naval forces of the two countries, an innovation? On the contrary, it would be easy to cite the declarations of the leading statesmen on both sides of the Channel, during the last twenty years, to prove that they have always been in the habit of regulating the amount of their navies by a reference to each other's armaments. True, this has been invariably done to justify an increase of expenditure. But why should not the same principle be also available in the interest of economy, and for the benefit of the taxpayers? A nation suffers no greater loss of dignity from surrendering its independence of action in regulating its armaments, whether the object be to meet a diminution or an increase of its neighbours' forces.

“Although this reduction of the obsolete ships of the line presents a case of the easiest solution, and should, therefore, in the first place, be treated as a separate measure, it could hardly fail to pave the way for

an amicable arrangement for putting some limit to those new armaments which are springing out of the present transition state of the two navies.

“The application of iron plates to shipbuilding, which has rendered the reconstruction of the navies necessary, must be regarded as the commencement of an indefinite series of changes; and, looking to the great variety of experiments now making, both in ships and artillery, and to the new projects which the inventors are almost daily forcing upon the attention of the governments, it is not improbable that, a few years hence, when England and France shall have renewed their naval armaments, they will again be rendered obsolete by new scientific discoveries.

“In the meantime, neither country adds to its relative strength by this waste of national wealth; for, as both governments aim at only a proportionate increase, it is not contemplated that either should derive exclusive advantage from the augmentation. An escape from this dilemma is not to be sought in the attempt to arrest the march of improvement, or to discourage the efforts of inventive genius: a remedy for the evil can only be found in a more frank understanding between the two governments. If they will discard the old and utterly futile theory of secrecy—a theory on which an individual manufacturer or merchant no longer founds his hopes of successful competition with a foreign rival—they may be enabled, by the timely exchange of explanations and assurances, to prevent what ought to be restricted to mere experimental trials, from growing into formidable preparations for war. If those who are responsible for the naval administration of the two countries were consulted, it would probably be found that they are appalled at the prospect of a rivalry which, whilst it can satisfy neither the reason nor the ambition of either party, offers a boundless field of expenditure to both.

“Nor should it be forgotten that the financial pressure caused by these rival armaments is a source of constant irritation to the populations of the two countries. The British taxpayers believe, on the authority of their leading statesmen, that the increased burden to which they are subjected is caused by the armaments on the other side of the Channel. The people of France are also taught to feel similarly aggrieved towards England. The feelings of mutual animosity produced by this sacrifice of substantial interests are not to be allayed by the exchange of occasional acts of friendship between the two *governments*. On the contrary, this inconsistent policy, in incessantly arming against each other at home, whilst uniting for common objects abroad, if it do not impair public confidence in their sincerity, tends at least to destroy all faith in an identity of interests between the rulers and the ruled, by showing how little advantage the peoples derive from the friendship of their governments.

"But the greatest evil connected with these rival armaments is that they destroy the strongest motives for peace. When two great neighbouring nations find themselves permanently subjected to a war expenditure, without the compensation of its usual excitements and honours, the danger to be apprehended is that, if an accident should occur to inflame their hostile passions—and we know how certain these accidents are at intervals to arise—their latent sense of suffering and injury may reconcile them to a rupture, as the only eventual escape from an otherwise perpetual war taxation in a time of peace.

"Circumstances appeal strongly to the two governments at the present juncture in favour of a measure of wise and safe economy. In consequence of the deplorable events in America, and the partial failure of the harvests of Europe, the commerce and manufactures of both countries are exposed to an ordeal of great suffering. Were the proposed naval reduction carried into effect, it would ameliorate the financial position of the governments, and afford the means for alleviating the fiscal burdens of the peoples. But the moral effect of such a measure would be still more important. It should be remembered that, although these large vessels have lost their value in the eyes of professional men, they preserve their traditional terrors for the world at large; and when they move about, in fleets, on neighbouring coasts, they excite apprehension in the public mind, and even check the spirit of commercial enterprise. Were such an amicable arrangement as has been suggested accomplished, it would be everywhere accepted as a pledge of peace; and, by inspiring confidence in the future, would help to reanimate the hopes of the great centres of trade and industry, not only in France and England, but throughout Europe.

"Will not the two governments, then, embrace this opportunity of giving effect to a policy which, whilst involving no risk, no sacrifice of honour, or diminution of relative power will tend to promote the present prosperity and future harmony of the two countries, and thus offer an example of wisdom and moderation worthy of this civilised age, and honourable to the fame of the two foremost nations of the earth?"